

A Family of Outlaws

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Summary: Kagome's quest for the Shikon no Tama is finished, yet she still has a destiny. Midoriko sends her and her family to another world to finish not only their own destiny, but to help start other's on their own. This is also a cross-over with How to Train Your Dragon. Disclaimer: I own none of the characters or general themes of this story. I own two characters only, Rock and Rain.

1. Kagome's Needed

****A Family of Outlaws****

Prologue: Kagome's Needed

A girl of nineteen was seen brushing leaves off the steps of her family shrine. She had long black hair that fell off her shoulders in waves. If the light hit it just right it would give off a blue shimmer. She wore the traditional outfits of a priestess. Around her neck was a pink jewel on a chain. She had chocolate brown eyes and a kind personality.

With a sigh the girl stopped her work. She glanced over to what looked like an old shack. Sealed inside was an old well. It was called the Bone Eaters well. Two years ago she was using the well to travel back and forth between her time and five hundred years in the past. She had a quest to fulfill with her friends from ancient Japan. The jewel she now wore around her neck had been shattered by her on accident. It was her duty to piece it back together and save the past from evil. That mission ended two years ago. Now the girl could only stare in longing at the well house. It had sealed itself and no longer allowed her entry.

Higarashi Kagome fingered the jewel that rested just above her heart. It was such a small trinket. A normal person would never believe you could change the world with just this small glass looking gem. Yet it alone was responsible for a large number of deaths in the past as

those that sought it's power ransacked the country-side, looking for fragments.

Kagome glanced around her at the Shrine. It was the same routine, day in and day out. It had gotten tedious and boring. "What I wouldn't give for a little excitement," she whispered. Kagome moved to continue her job of sweeping the shrine steps.

Kagome froze in place as she noticed the jewel she had was glowing. She dropped the broom and cupped the jewel in both hands. "I didn't make a wish," she pleaded with it. "I did not use the words." The glowing increased and blinded Kagome.

When she was finally able to open her eyes she glanced around and found herself in an open field. In the center of the field was what looked like the God Tree. A woman was standing under the tree. Kagome couldn't help but feel that she had seen that person before. Slowly, Kagome started to approach. "You have no need to fear," the woman said. "I am here to begin you on a new path and to help another destiny begin."

"I thought I had finished with destiny," Kagome snapped. She quickly covered her mouth and bowed. "I apologize, I'm just tired of my life being thrown into situations out of my control."

"It is understandable child," the woman said. "I too had moments of resentment towards destiny for the fate it handed to me. You need not fear this destiny. I am simply sending you to find your soulmate. The destiny that is to begin is the one of new life."

"Who are you?"

"I am the priestess Midoriko."

"Does that mean that we're in the jewel."

"The answer to that is both yes and no. I can not exist outside of the jewel. Yet if I were to pull you into the jewel you would not be able to escape. I formed a communication link between your mind and the jewel. You are still in the outside world. I am a mere reflection of my former self speaking to you through the link. The bond you have with the jewel is so great that you are able to see me clearly."

"You said you'll send me to my soulmate," Kagome began. "Are you sending me back to the past and to Inuyasha?"

Midoriko shook her head sadly. "That is not something I can do," she said. "Inuyasha was the soulmate of Kikyo and you are her reincarnation. However, their time together was in the past. Your souls have both been reborn. I am sending you to meet his reincarnation. My question for you, will you have difficulty separating the current incarnation of the soul from it's past life or will you accept him as he is?"

Kagome thought about it for a little while. "I'm not sure how I will react," she honestly answered. "I could say that I won't, but I won't know for sure unless I was to meet that person."

"Let me give you some advice," Midoriko started. "A soul is reborn

without the memories of it's previous life for a reason. Every new life has different parents, different life experiences. These experiences shape a person into who they are as adults. This incarnation of Inuyasha's soul has not led such a hard life. He will not be so rough around the edges. Can you accept that or will you expect him to be exactly like Inuyasha?"

Kagome closed her eyes and shook her head. "I could never do that to someone," she said. "I know what it feels like to be constantly compared to a past life and degraded because of it. I will not expect to find Inuyasha here. I will meet who I meet. As far as I'm concerned the soul belongs to the new incarnation, Inuyasha's experiences just helped to make the soul stronger."

Midoriko nodded her head in approval. "Ano, I do have a question though." She was twiddling her fingers together in nervousness. "You said that you will be sending me to him. Do you mean to the country where he lives or the time?"

"I mean to the world."

"He doesn't live in this world?"

"Your soulmate lives in a world that is dominated by oceans. That is where the destiny of many will come together and defeat the darkness that will soon rise to threaten it."

"You mean like another Naraku?"

"That's exactly right," Midoriko answered. "Though I can not give you more information on the enemy. Is there anything that you need to know before you leave?"

"What about my family?" Kagome hastily asked. "Will I ever see them again?"

"I can see that your family means a lot to you," Midoriko commented. "I will give all of you a choice. You may all travel together to the two different worlds that I need to send you. The other choice is that I will give you time to say your farewells."

"It's something that I need to talk with all of them about," Kagome said. "I can understand that my going is not negotiable. However, I can't ask my family to just up and leave everything they know for the rest of their lives."

"It is a big decision," Midoriko agreed. "I will give you all two days to decide."

"You said that I will be send to two worlds," Kagome added. "I remember what you said about the world where my soulmate is. What can you tell me of the other world?"

"I can tell you nothing of it at the moment," Midoriko declined. "It will be a long time before you travel to that world. All you need to know for the moment is that the first world will eventually be where you will spend the rest of your days."

Kagome nodded in understanding. "Then I suppose it's time to go and talk with my family. Will you tell us more about the world's we'll be

going to? Things like culture and history so we don't stick out?"

"Of course I will," Midoriko nodded. "I will impart my knowledge of the worlds to you when it's needed. You need not fear becoming lost." Kagome nodded as Midoriko slowly vanished.

Kagome blinked her eyes a few times and found herself back at the steps of the shrine. She quickly picked up her broom and rushed to the tool shack. After she put away the cleaning device she hurried back to the main house. She knew that her mother would be starting to prepare dinner.

As she expected, Kagome found her mother in the kitchen. "Mom, I need to talk with you," she said. Kagome then proceeded to explain to Akita the conversation that she had with Midoriko. When Kagome came to the part about traveling to different worlds she had to take a seat. She was even more stunned when she heard that she had an opportunity to join her daughter and keep a close eye on her this time.

"If we did leave, what will happen to the shrine?" Akita asked.

Kagome was silent, she didn't have an answer. Akita stood and continued to prepare dinner. "I will discuss this with your grandfather. I don't want to just abandon the shrine. Then the fact that Souta still hasn't finished High School yet. This is a very big decision Kagome."

"I know it is Mom," Kagome agreed. "I'm afraid that, no matter what you decide, I still have to go. I may not have the option to ever come and see all of you ever again." An awkward silence fell over the room. It wasn't something that Akita wanted to think about. If she stayed she would never see one of her children again. If Souta didn't want to go then she would be torn between both children, but she doubted he would miss out on this adventure.

"Let me talk to your grandfather," Akita finally said. "We'll let you know what's going on before the deadline Midoriko set."

The week passed by and Midoriko called Kagome to their meeting place once again. "Has your family come to a decision?" she asked.

Kagome nodded her head slowly. "Grandpa is going to stay with the shrine. He's decided that he's too old for adventures. Souta was excited to hear that he could go on an adventure. Mom is going, she doesn't want to lose either of her children, let alone both, to an entirely different world."

"Then I will give you all a few moments to bid your grandfather farewell," Midoriko allowed. "Call for me when you are ready."

Kagome found herself in front of her family. "I just talked with Midoriko," she informed them. "She's giving us a few minutes to say 'good-bye'." Tears were forming in her eyes as she turned to her grandfather. Everyone was very emotional at that point.

After awhile, Grandfather told them that it was time for them to go.

"You've all dallied enough," he said. "I will be fine and will pray for all of you." He then pulled Kagome into a hug. "I will especially pray for you child. You have a very complex destiny. You must have been born under a fated star. I pray for your happiness and the happiness of that of your soulmate and future children as well."

Kagome squeezed him just a little tighter. "I will miss you Grandpa," she cried.

"I will miss all of you as well." After a few more moments of tears Kagome called for Midoriko. If she didn't call for her then they would never leave. The three watched as the only family member that was staying faded from view. The three slowly waved, imagining that he was seeing them fade in the same way.

The three found themselves in front of a small house in the middle of a field. They were stunned to find that they had memories of major events of this world. The main being that of a pirate named Gold Rodger and his most recent execution.

After exploring the house and it's surroundings they found that it was set up to be quite self sufficient. A large garden was in the back and a forest full of wild life was not far. Kagome soon discovered that the forest was teeming with medicinal herbs. She would pick them and prepare them herself. She was hoping to eventually use them as an extra source of income.

The family had been living in the house for three months. Kagome was returning home from selling her herbs and purchasing extra necessities in town. Her sacred bow and a quiver of arrows was attached to her back. She told the villages it was so she could hunt on her way home. However, Kagome was a bit more practical then that. She new bandits and pirates were common in this world. The weapon was as much for protection as it was for hunting.

Halfway into her return journey a group of men came out of the trees. They were all leering at her. Kagome rolled her eyes and lowered her goods bag. She then pulled her bow off her shoulder and notched an arrow. "I suggest that you all let me pass," she said.

"Now that's not nice," the apparent leader said. "We just want to talk with you."

"If that's all you wanted then your buddies over there wouldn't be behaving like pigs." Kagome gestured towards two men licking their lips in a very suggestive manner. "If you all don't want to become eunuchs then I suggest you let me pass peacefully."

Some of the weaker men started to back away. The leader, though, was becoming angry. "Why are you wimps backing off? There's one of her and seven of us. She can't possibly fend all of us off at once."

"She doesn't need to." Kagome turned to the sound of another man's voice. Three figures had come up to them from further down the trail. One of them had a dark green cloak with a hood. Kagome could see had a tatoo on his face, though she couldn't make out what it was. One was a man with an odd appearance. He had white hair on one side of his head and blonde on the other. His coat matched the colors of his

hair respectively. A pair of sunglasses adorned his fine features. Although one lense was colored blue and the other orange. He held a glass of wine in one hand. The last one, however, nearly blew her mind. If she thought the second looked weird this one definately took the cake. What she though looked like a man with a giant head stood there. He/she had curly purple hair. On top of the hair was a crown. A purplish pink spandex suit with fishnet stocking and thigh high boots and elbow length gloves added to the weirdness. A fishnet cape finished off the strange look.

The man in green stepped closer. "What sort of barbarians gang up on a person?" he demanded.

"I'll teach you to insult us." The leader then started to change shapes. He started to resemble a wild boar.

"He's a devil fruit user Dragon," puple guy stated. Kagome bit her tone to keep from pointing out that he just stated the obvious.

The boar man charged at the four of them. The man in green swooped Kagome up into his arms and leapt out of the way. Kagome had a brief moment of deja voux. She shook it off, a fight was nowhere to be distracted. While the two of them were still in the air, Kagome took her bow and aimed it for the Boar man.

"I don't think that will work sweetling," purple man pointed out.

Kagome smirked as she let her reiki flow into the arrow. "Hit the mark," she muttered. The arrow released in a show of pink light. The Boar jumped to the side, avoiding being hit directly. However, he got caught up in the blast of the arrow. As he landed on the ground he reverted back to a man.

"What the hell," the leader demanded. "What the hell was that you witch?"

"That's the first I've been called a witch," Kagome mused. "Wench, reincarnation, miko, priestess, stubborn, bossy and a pain in the butt. Never witch though."

The man that had a hold of Kagome gently set her down on her feet once again. He then stretched out a hand towards the bandits. "Wait a moment Dragon," purple man said. "Let me finish these bandits with my Dragqueen Kenpo." The man, Dragon, nodded his head.

Kagome started to blink rapidly. She wished she was just imagining someone call out such a ridiculous fighting style. "Do as you wish Ivankov," Dragon said. He was standing right behind Kagome. His voice that close to her ear sent shivers running down her spine. She tried very hard to control her actions.

Kagome watched as Ivankov fought the bandits. Some he knocked out and others he hit so hard they were blown away. The leader was an interesting match though. Ivankov grew some sort of claws on his hands and stuck the man with them. In a manner of a few seconds the leader was made a woman. The person ran away, crying in humiliation and defeat.

"That was interesting," Kagome stated.

"That wasn't the only interesting thing," Dragon spoke. Kagome looked at him to see him still just behind her and staring at her. She eeped as she took a step away from him. Unnoticed by her was Ivankov elbowing the third male. He was pointing the two of them and making gestures towards them.

"How did you cancel his devil fruit powers?" Dragon asked.

Kagome sighed and moved to pick up her arrow and bag off the ground. "I suppose a long story short is that I'm a priestess," she said. "I was granted the ability of purification. Before you ask, no I did not eat a devil fruit to gain this ability." Kagome flicked the stones and dirt off of the arrow head before placing the arrows back with the others. "It was just a theory that I could cancel out devil fruit. It just so happened that my theory was just proven correct."

"What a fascinating ability sweetling," Ivankov put in. He danced around until he was right next to her. "I would love to hear more about it. How long have you had this gift?"

"Since I was fifteen," Kagome answered. She didn't see a reason to lie to them yet.

"How did you discover you had it?" the multi-colored man asked.

Kagome let out a nervous laugh at that. "It was a life or death, sink or swim situation."

Ivankov got into Kagome's face at that. "Who would want to hurt a sweet thing like you?"

Kagome glanced in the direction the bandit leader turned woman ran off to. "Who wouldn't?" She then turned to the three of them. "My name is Kagome, Higarashi Kagome." She bowed to the three of them. "Thank you for coming to help me."

"It was our pleasure sweetling," Ivankov said. "You might already know this, I'm Ivankov. That man is named Monkey D. Dragon. The gentleman next to me is Inazuma and we're with the revolutionary army."

"Ivankov!" Dragon snapped.

"You mean the army that's working on disposing of the current nobles and government?" Kagome went silent for a moment. "I wish you the best. I can't stand what those nobles do as what they believe is their earned right by birth. Respect is earned, not demanded or born into."

The three men stared at Kagome at her statement. "I do honestly hope for your success," Kagome said after the silence became too much. She thought that they were silent because they didn't believe her.

"Not many are so vocal in their opinion," Inazuma stated. "You don't fear punishment from the government or nobles?"

"I don't fear them at all," Kagome said. "My views are like tiny

stones thrown in a pond. Yes, the ripples go away after a time, but the pond is changed forever. My words will be remembered in the hearts of people."

"You should be our spokesperson," Ivankov mused.

Kagome laughed as she started to walk again. "I have responsibilities here Mister Ivankov. My mother and brother do their best, but by selling herbs I'm able to give our family that much more."

"So it was your herbs we came across," Inazuma stated. "We were gathering supplies when we spotted a certain herb for sale. It's very rare sense the preparation of it is so delicate, not many want to take the time for it. We asked about it and they sent us after you, the seller, just after you left the town. I thought perhaps you were an apprentice to a master herbalist and just running errands."

"I was an apprentice to a master," Kagome said. She kept a conversation going with the three as they walked towards her home. "I was taught by a priestess that specialized in herbal remedies. She was kind, but she demanded perfection."

"You sound as if you care a great deal for her," Ivankov said.

"I did," Kagome agreed. Dragon glanced over in her direction at the tone of voice. It was a mixture of sadness and longing. "I'm sure her new apprentice is learning a great deal from her. She'll be able take over for Lady Kaede when she can no longer perform her duties due to age."

"Why were you not chosen as her successor?" Dragon asked.

Kagome glanced down at the jewel hanging from the chain on her neck. "Destiny," she answered simply. "We all knew I had to leave one day." Kagome squared her shoulders and looked straight ahead. "It's getting rather late in the day. I'm sure that mother wouldn't mind the company if you care to join us for dinner."

"We wouldn't want to impose," Ivankov stated.

"Just help me gather some meat and it will be no trouble," Kagome smiled.

2. Children of Destiny

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****A Family of Outlaws****

Chapter One: Children of Destiny

It's been two years since Kagome and her family arrived in the outskirts of Foosha Village. A year since she and Dragon had been married. Now she was in the back room of the house she lived in with her mother and brother. Her mother was bustling around, getting things ready for the new arrival. That morning Kagome had gone into

labor.

Souta ran for the village to get the Doctor and to inform Monkey D. Garp, Kagome's father-in-law, of the child's coming. With a resounding bang of the door Garp arrived in a flurry. He had Souta under one arm and the doctor under the other. Souta was laughing at the very excitable man. The poor doctor was complaining how it was undignified for a man of his age to be carried around like a sack.

Akita rushed out to greet them. "She's doing fine for the moment doctor," she said. "Kagome is in the back room. I have everything set up that we've discussed. She went into labor about an hour after waking. Her contractions are two minutes apart now."

"Excellent work," the doctor said. He muttered under his breath as Garp let him down. "I'll do a quick examination to see how the mother and child are doing. We will have an estimation then on how much longer we have to wait."

As the doctor went into the back room Garp looked like he was going to follow. "Hold it right there mister," Akita charged. She stood between Garp and the birthing room. "Just where do you think you're heading?"

"I'm going to see my grandchild," Garp said.

"OUR grandchild isn't here yet," Akita snapped. "You can't go in there while Kagome is still in labor. Men are not allowed in a birthing chamber except for doctors. You will have to wait out here with Souta."

"Ah, but Akita..."

"No 'buts'," Akita poked his chest. "I won't have you making a ruckus during this." She then turned her attention to her son. "Souta, please find something to keep him busy with." She then turned on her heel and disappeared into the room. She shut the door in Garp's face when he went to take a peek.

"It'll be fine Mister Garp," Souta said. "My sister is tougher then she looks. My new niece or nephew will be just as tough." Souta placed a hand on Garp's shoulder and led him to the front door. "I needed to chop wood today since we're low. With an infant in the house we'll need to make sure to keep it warm and cozy inside." That did the trick as Garp zipped outside. Before Souta knew it he could hear the sounds of wood being chopped. With a shake of his head and a chuckle, Souta followed the man out.

Garp was concentrating so hard on his task that he didn't notice Akita coming up until she cleared her throat. "Mister Garp, you can come in now. I'm sure that your grandson would love to meet you." In yet another whirlwind of movement Garp was inside the house. Akita turned to see Souta sitting on the fence. "Why weren't you helping chop wood?"

Souta pointed to the side of the house that Akita couldn't see. "I would have been in the way. I think we're covered for wood for a few months though." Akita looked around the corner to see a wood pile as long as the wall and almost as tall. Souta walked past his mother

with a chuckle. "He could hardly sit still. Once I said we would need to keep the baby warm he started chopping wood like a man possessed."

"Honestly," Akita shook her head. "One would think that it's his son and not his grandson. Speaking of which, was Dragon in town? I didn't get a chance to ask you earlier."

Souta shook his head sadly. "Mister Garp said that he hasn't come back yet from his latest mission. I'm a little worried Mom."

"I am as well," Akita sighed. "Midoriko did say we would leave for another world when a child of destiny has been born. I believe Kagome's son is the catalyst for our departure."

"Poor Kagome," Souta softly spoke. "She won't get to explain things to Dragon. Not only that, but she'll be leaving behind her son. Mom, what will Kagome do?"

"I don't know," Akita admitted. "I only know that she will be extremely upset. The best thing for us is to be there for her." The two walked back into the house as the doctor was leaving. He gave them instructions along with congratulations before leaving.

Akita and Souta walked into the room to find Garp holding a blue bundle and making goofy faces. Kagome lay in an exhausted pile on the bed. She had a tired smile as she watched the new grandfather. Her smile widened a bit when she saw Souta. "Come meet your nephew, Souta. His name is Monkey D. Luffy." Her voice was slightly hoarse from crying out in pain. Akita offered her a glass of water which she accepted then turned to Garp.

"We need to talk," she said. She waited for Garp to hand the babe to Souta and sit next to her. "I was hoping that Dragon would be home in time for the birth. I have so much that I need to tell him. I'm hoping that you will tell him for me."

"You can tell him yourself when he gets back," Garp argued.

Kagome sadly shook her head. "I won't be here," she whispered. "Mom, Souta and I are being called away. We don't know how long we'll be gone." Kagome then started to choke on her sobs. "I can't take Luffy with me." Garp moved to hold Kagome and let her cry on his shoulder. He looked at Akita and Souta. Akita was watching with tears in her eyes. Souta was looking down and to the side, a pained expression on his face.

"What's going on here?" he demanded.

"Kagome has a very complex destiny and history," Akita started. "When she was fifteen she was dragged into a well and taken five hundred years in the past. For two years she traveled back and forth trying to stop an evil force from spreading. She succeeded in her goal and was sent home. Two years ago she received a visit from a powerful priestess. She was told her destiny wasn't finished yet. She had to travel to two new worlds. The first she would find her soulmate. Kagome would then travel to the second world once another child of destiny had been born. We all think that Luffy is the child of destiny."

"Can't you tell that priestess 'no'?" Garp asked. "Luffy needs his mother."

"I know," Kagome sobbed. "I want to be here for him, watch him grow into a strong man. But I can't stop the power of the jewel."

"What jewel?"

Kagome leaned away from Garp. She pulled the pink jewel from her neck and held it in her hand. "This is the Shikon no Tama," she explained. "Or the Jewel of Four Souls. I was born with it in my body. It was taken from me when I was pulled down the well. I retrieved it, but it was stolen by a Crow Demon. I managed to shoot the crow down, but the jewel broke. I spent those two years finding the pieces of the jewel with friends that I had made in the past. We eventually came up against a powerful half demon that was also looking for the jewel fragments for his own gain. Just a shard of this jewel grants a person unimaginable power. It's my duty to protect it from those that would misuse it. The powerful priestess that came to me is trapped within. It's part of her power that's inside of the jewel. The other part is the souls of demons that she trapped inside with her. My power alone isn't enough to stop them from taking my family and I. The only hope I have is that we will be allowed to return once we're finished in that other world."

"How long will that take?" Garp asked.

Kagome shook her head sadly. "It might take a few days or a few years," she answered. "The only thing that they told me is that it would be when the time was right."

Garp was staring blankly at the wall. "You promise to return?" he asked.

"I promise on my life," Kagome vowed.

"I will watch Luffy until Dragon returns," Garp said. "I will help raise him to be strong and to do the right thing no matter what."

"I knew I could count on you," Kagome smiled. "Will you tell Dragon everything I told you?"

"I promise," Garp agreed.

"Will you also tell him that I love him and Luffy and that I'll miss them? I'll return to them as soon as I'm able to."

"You can rest easy Kagome," Garp said. "I'll make sure that Dragon and Luffy both know how loved they are."

Kagome turned her gaze to Souta. "I think that it's time," she said. "Please give Luffy to his Grandpa." She watched as Garp tenderly took the baby.

Without being asked he walked back over and held Luffy to where Kagome could see his face. His eyes were closed in sleep and his pudgy cheeks were red from crying earlier. He had a tuft of soft black hair on the top of his head. Kagome reached out and started to stroke her son's face. "I love you," she whispered. "Be strong for me, my handsome little man. You might not remember me when I come

back, but I'm sure you will know somehow that I'm your Mom."

Kagome had tears streaming down her cheeks as she watched her son fade from her view. It was just the same as what happened when they bid her own grandfather good-bye. The last she saw was Luffy opening his eyes to look at her and him starting to wail, loudly. Not able to hold in any longer, Kagome started to cry loudly as well. Her heart was breaking at the sound of her child. She knew he needed her, but she couldn't stop fate.

~ Garp walked into the village. On his back was a large pack filled to the brim with baby furniture and other things he could find at Kagome's home. In his arms he carried the precious bundle of his grandson. He had spent the walk to Foosha Village thinking of a way to explain what happened to Kagome and her family. He finally came to the conclusion that he would lie and say he had been hunting for them when the house was attacked by bandits. He would say he found Luffy hidden in a laundry basket as the house was burning. He didn't want them all to label Kagome as a bad mother for abandoning her child.

The doctor came rushing up when he saw Garp. Taking a deep breath, Garp relayed the story he had come up with. The doctor rushed the child into his clinic to do a check up. Once he was satisfied the baby didn't suffer from smoke inhalation he let Garp take him. Makino was waiting just outside. She had been close friends with Kagome for the last two years. She had overheard the story being told to the doctor.

"If you need any help just name it," she declared. "I will help you raise Luffy, just the way I know that his mother would."

Garp nodded and started walking away. "I do have a favor to ask Makino," he said. "When Luffy gets older, I would like to not talk to him about his mother. If he asks, tell him about her. But I refuse to tell him that she's dead."

"That sounds cruel," Makino protested.

They silently walked into Garp's house. "I didn't want to say anything in front of the other villagers," he started. "Kagome, her mom and brother are alive. It's just, magic took them away from us; took Kagome away from Luffy. She promised that she would be back. That's why I don't want to tell Luffy she's dead. She's not dead and she will be back."

"Where did she go?" The two turned to see Dragon standing in the doorway.

"You have a bad habit of listening in on conversations," Garp complained.

"Where is my wife Father?" Dragon ignored him. "What happened while I was away?"

Makino bid a quiet 'farewell' and slipped past Dragon. She knew when it was a family matter and not to get involved.

Garp walked up to Dragon and handed him the small bundle. "First of all, meet your son. I believe you and Kagome agreed to name him

Luffy."

Dragon looked down at the tiny person he held in his arms. The infant was fussing, mouth opening and closing as he searched.

Garp busied himself and prepared a bottle in the way the doctor had explained to him. He gave the bottle to Dragon and told him to feed Luffy. "Go sit with him and I'll tell you." Dragon moved to the living area to get more comfortable.

"Where is Kagome?" Dragon reiterated.

Garp groaned as he sat down. "What do you know of Kagome's past?" he asked.

"She told me everything," Dragon said.

"Including her trips through a well?" Dragon's head snapped up to look at Garp. "I see that she did. So you must know what the Shikon no Tama is." Garp watched as his son nodded and looked back down to Luffy. "The Shikon no Tama took her, her mother and brother to a different world. She was told that they would be needed there."

"She willingly abandoned our son?"

Garp's eyes narrowed dangerously at Dragon. "If you had been there you wouldn't be saying that," he growled out. "You didn't see her tears. She was crying for you and for Luffy."

A look of shame crossed Dragon's face. He knew that Kagome would never willingly leave him and their son. It went against her personality. He was upset that neither he nor she could do anything to stay together. Dragon silently stared down at Luffy.

"Kagome told me she would be back," Garp continued to speak. "Until then, I'll be here for the two of you if you need anything."

Dragon's features hardened as he turned to look Garp in the eye. "I can't take care of Luffy," he said. "I have decided to devote all my time to the army. This world needs to be a place of equality. I have to have it ready before Kagome gets back. I want to show her a world where people aren't treated like dirt just because of the circumstances of their birth. I want Luffy to live in a free world."

"So you'll abandon your son?" Garp asked.

"I'm doing this for him," Dragon said. "I'm a wanted man and leader of the Revolutionary Army. The government considers me to be the most dangerous man alive. That's no life to raise a child in. If the government found out I had a son they would target him as well. It's a good thing Kagome isn't here right now. I was determined to take her with me this time. She would become a target in this as well."

"I can understand your reasoning, but think of what this means for Luffy. Both of his parents are alive, but neither are around to raise him. What will that knowledge do to him?"

"Don't tell him about us," Dragon said. He watched as Luffy closed his eyes once the bottle was finished. He gave small, whimpering noises as he fell asleep. "He's far too innocent to be involved with me. Let him grow up without the government hating him just for being born. He deserves at least that much." Dragon stood and handed his son back to Garp. "I won't be coming to visit. Wouldn't want to risk anyone getting wind of our relation. I will be thinking of you both." Dragon rushed out of the house before Garp could stop him. That was the first and last day that Luffy saw his parents.

~ They had been here for a month. Akita and Souta built a small shelter for all of them while Kagome was still too weak to contribute. It was a humble existence, although Midoriko never said that life would be handed to them on a silver platter.

Akita was walking along the beach of the small island the three travelers found themselves on. She was searching out tide pools and looking for any fish that may have gotten trapped. She paused in her walk when she heard a small sound. Following the sounds, it led her to a cave that had water flowing into it. Curiosity getting the better of her, Akita continued to follow the sound that was getting louder the closer she got.

After walking in the dark for a few minutes Akita stumbled into something. Taking out a flashlight, deciding it was worth a few minutes of battery life, she turned it on. Akita nearly dropped the light into the water as the sight startled her. A dragon lay half in and half out of the water. It's eyes were frozen open, clearly dead. The body was riddled with cuts, arrows and various other wounds. Lifting the light higher, Akita identified the dragon as a Deadly Nadder. On the back of the dragon was a worn saddle. It was charred in a few places.

Akita turned away from the scene when the noise started to become more insistent. Now she was able to clearly determine that it was the cries of a baby. She followed the crying further into the cave. About twenty feet from the dragon another figure was laying on the path. This time it was a grown woman. She was on her side, curled protectively around the baby that was crying.

Akita checked for a pulse on the woman. Like the dragon before her, she had passed away. Akita carefully pulled the babe from it's suspected mother's protective embrace. Angry blue eyes were glaring at her. The child looked very young, a week old at best. Akita quickly glanced around the cave. She found a piece of paper by the woman's head. Making a last minute decision, she grabbed that too and headed back to the shelter she and her children had made for themselves.

The child's cries grew louder the longer it took to return. When Akita was close enough to the shelter, Kagome had come out to investigate the source of the noise. She rushed to her mother to find out what was going on. "I don't know how long they were down there," Akita explained. "I need to find this little one some milk."

"Give her to me Mom," Kagome said. "I'm still lactating from my birth."

"Are you sure Kagome?" Akita asked. "I know how hard it must be for you."

"I'm needed right now," Kagome argued. "I'll worry about the repercussions once we get this little one fed and cleaned." Kagome took the infant from her mother and went back inside.

"What's going on?" Souta walked up.

"Your sister's gentle heart," Akita sighed. She then told Souta about what she had found. "I haven't looked at the note yet."

"Well, let's see what it has to say."

They opened the paper to find characters that neither were familiar with. "I thought Midoriko was going to make sure that we had the knowledge we would need to survive," Souta stated. "If this is written in a common language for this world then why can't we read it?"

"Read what?" Kagome approached the two of them. She had the baby tucked into her top as she fed, keeping herself from becoming exposed.

"I found this next to the baby and it's mother," Akita explained. She handed the paper over to Kagome. As Kagome looked at it, the Shikon no Tama started to glow a soft pink.

"It says: _'Berk was attacked by Daggur and his army of Berserkers while the chief was away. If you should find this and my daughter still lives, bring her to Outcast Island. Her father is there along with allies of Berk. Her father's name is Hiccup. I pray someone finds my body before it's too late for my daughter._"

Astrid'"

"You can read that?" Souta asked.

"I couldn't at first," Kagome admitted. "But the jewel reacted to my needs."

"Okay, so how do we take the baby to her father?" Souta crossed his arms over his chest.

"I don't know," Kagome admitted. "This is a first for me."

"First of all we need to ask ourselves, how long have they been there?" Akita put a finger to her chin as she spoke. "How did they get there without us knowing about it? Would this Hiccup still be on Outcast Island or would he have returned home with the chief? Most importantly of all, in which direction will we find either place?" Silence reigned over the three of them, the only sounds were the baby happily feeding.

"It couldn't have been more than a day or two," Kagome said thoughtfully. "How long can infants survive without food or water?"

"That's a good question," Akita said. "The average adult can survive two weeks or more. Sometimes they can last up to seventy days or more. An infant will survive off of their baby fat if they're not

getting the necessary nutrients. How did the baby look to you before you covered her back up?"

"She didn't look like she was starved," Kagome admitted. "Let's also think about the bodies. Did you see or smell any sign of decay?"

"Come to think of it, no." Akita thought back to what she had seen. "It all looked like they were fresh wounds."

"Then she couldn't have been left alone for more than a day," Kagome mused. "That's a good thing." She turned her attention to Souta. "Could you go and give the bodies a proper burial? She died to protect her baby. She deserves a honorable send off, not to be pecked at by scavengers." Souta nodded and headed off for the direction Akita indicated.

"Now the only question is how do we get her to her father?" Akita asked. "We don't have a boat or any way to send a letter."

"Mom!" The women looked to where Souta was calling from. He was pointing up into the sky. The women looked up and froze. Several blotches were getting bigger as they headed straight for them. It was a horde of dragons of varying size.

"Do they have riders?" Kagome asked.

"They're too far away to tell." Akita glanced back at Kagome. "Just in case, take the baby inside. Try to keep her as quiet as you can. If this turns out to be Daggur then we don't want to give them a reason to attack us." Kagome nodded as she disappeared. "Souta, save that for later. Come back here and get ready for anything. We don't know what to expect."

After a few minutes the dragons landed in front of Akita and Souta. One was a large brown dragon with four wings. A rider with brown and blue armor swung off of it's back. Another was a brown dragon that looked like a boulder. A large man with blonde hair and peach fuzz for a beard sat on it's back. The last dragon was gray. It had a steel helmet on it's head. A muscular man in a brown tunic sat on top.

"I'm sorry to impose," the warrior in brown and blue said. The warrior took off their helmet to reveal a woman with graying brown hair. "We're looking for someone. Have you seen a blonde woman riding a Deadly Nadder and carrying a small bundle?"

"Who are you?" Akita asked.

"My name is Vilka," the woman said. "This is my partner, Cloud Jumper. Over there is Fishlegs and his dragon Meatlug. On the other side is Eret and his dragon Skull Crusher."

"Why are you looking for a Deadly Nadder and it's rider?" Souta asked.

"The rider is my daughter-in-law," Vilka said. "I told her to flee from an attack with her new babe. The enemy was overwhelming us and I couldn't protect them."

"What's the name of your daughter-in-law?" Akita pushed.

A look of relief passed over Vilka's features. She was assuming that these people knew where she was. "My daughter-in-law is Astrid."

Akita closed her eyes and let out a slow breath through her nose. "You should come inside with me Vilka," she said. "Souta, take Fishlegs and Eret with you. They can help you with the task. Tell them what happened on the way." Souta nodded solemnly and motioned for the two to follow him.

Akita went inside the shelter and Vilka ducked in after her. Kagome was sitting by the fire, trying to burp a now full infant. "Kagome, this is Vilka. She's Astrid's mother-in-law."

Kagome looked at her mother with startled eyes. She held a silent question in them as well. Akita shook her head negatively, she hadn't told her what was going on yet. With a nod, Kagome stood and walked over to where Vilka was. She was looking around, as if trying to spot someone.

"Miss Vilka," Kagome spoke softly. Once the woman turned her attention to her, Kagome handed the infant over to her. "I believe this is your grand-daughter."

"What are you saying?" Vilka gasped.

Kagome took the letter out of her trouser pocket and offered it to Vilka. "My mother only recently found the baby and this letter. I'm sorry to say that Astrid was also found. She didn't make it."

Vilka fell to the ground. Her knees hit the dirt floor, but she kept the baby safe in her arms. She started to cry into the swaddling blanket. "I'm so sorry Rain," she whimpered. "I couldn't save your momma. Oh, my poor Hiccup. How will I tell him?"

"It wasn't your fault Miss Vilka," Akita spoke softly. "Place the blame where it belongs. Who is this Daggur person anyway?"

"He was another chief in a neighboring village," Vilka explained. "He became jealous of my son when he discovered humans and dragons could live in peace. He wanted to create an army of dragons. Hiccup has thwarted him so far."

"It looked to me that they set an ambush up for all of you then," Kagome said. "It seems too convenient of timing. You chief leaves with a few warriors and they attack you."

"The way the wounds looked on both the dragon and on Astrid," Akita started. "It looked like they were being attacked without an opportunity to defend."

"That's typical of Berserkers," Vilka said. "They can't be reasoned with when they go into a battle rage, striking hard and fast to incapacitate the enemy. If you say Astrid didn't have a chance to fight back then she was ambushed. Astrid is the best warrior in hand to hand combat on Berk. She and Storm Fly, her Deadly Nadder, would have concentrated on running if they had Rain with them. Not to mention that they would have taken a blow to keep her from getting

hurt."

"It's still a tragedy," Akita said. "How could anyone be so heartless as to attack a mother and her babe?"

"Daggur has a reputation for being deranged," Vilka said. "In fact, he's proud of that. He once was going to kill my son along with himself if Hiccup didn't give him what he wanted."

"Did he get what he wanted?" Kagome asked.

Vilka shook her head. "Hiccup told me that another dragon showed up and inadvertently saved the day. Dragons aren't bad creatures, just misunderstood." Vilka carefully stood, still holding Rain. "Is that where Souta took Eret and Fishlegs? They went to see to the bodies of Astrid and Storm Fly?"

Akita slowly nodded and gestured to show Vilka. The three women then headed for the beach. Cloud Jumper followed them keeping an eye on the things going on around him.

"I'm surprised you live on this island," Vilka commented. "It's not very hospitable. In fact, it's quite barren in the winter."

"We've only been here a month," Akita answered. "We were stranded here."

"A ship wreck?"

"You could call it that." Kagome remained silent as Akita answered Vilka's questions. Her son's tiny face still fresh in her memory.

"Rain seems quite content," Vilka changed the subject. "How have you been feeding her?"

"We only found her about an hour ago," Akita answered. "At any rate, she's lucky Kagome is still lactating from her pregnancy."

Vilka looked over to Kagome then back to Akita. "I did not see any other babes."

"It's a long story," Akita answered. "Kagome was forced to leave her newborn son and husband. We don't know when we'll be able to go back. I'm hoping that it's not too long."

Silence grew between the women. Vilka knew all too well what Kagome felt. She had been taken from her son when he was babe as well. She had only been reunited with him five years ago. Now he was twenty-five and chief of their village.

"The beach is just beyond those rocks," Akita pointed out.

Before they could walk further a voice calling out for their mother stopped them. Along with that voice was the roar of a dragon. "It's my son," Vilka announced. "I had sent him a message with a Terrible Terror before going to look for Astrid and Rain."

The three women turned to see a tall and skinny man riding a pure black dragon approach. Sitting in front of him was a young boy of

around three years old. The boy looked like Vilka. Akita and Kagome assumed that the father looked the same. They couldn't tell for sure since he was wearing a helmet that hid his face.

The dragon landed and the man jumped off. He carried the boy in his arms. "I got your message," he said. "Have you found them." He stopped and looked at the bundle in Vilka's arms.

"Rain is safe Hiccup," Vilka said. Hiccup set the little boy down and gently took Rain. Vilka then picked the boy up and started cuddling him. "I'm sorry to tell you that Astrid and Storm Fly..." Vilka couldn't finish as she started crying.

"Kagome, why don't you take Miss Vilka and the children back to the hut? I'm sure a nice cup of tea would be welcome. I'll explain everything to your son Vilka." Vilka nodded as she allowed Kagome to steer her away from the beach.

"Your name is Hiccup?" Akita waited for some sort of response. Once she received a nod she motioned for him to follow her. "I found your wife and child not too long ago in a cave," she started. "Rain was the only one that was alive."

Hiccup stopped in his tracks. "You mean my wife, the mother of my children...?"

"I'm sorry Mister Hiccup," Akita said. "My son and two of your friends are at the cave right now. I'm sure they're setting things up to give your wife an honorable funeral."

"Could you take me there?"

"Of course."

After the funeral was finished the five people headed back for the hut. Kagome had prepared a stew to serve everyone. Since there wasn't enough room she fed everyone outside. Everyone was having a hushed conversation while Akita and Souta kept the boy, who they learned was named Rock, busy. Vilka told Hiccup how Kagome had fed Rain and they were stranded on this island.

Hiccup offered the three a place to live in Berk. In exchange, he hoped that Kagome would nurse Rain and help raise his children as their nanny. There were no other women on Berk that were lactating and they shuddered at the idea of giving Rain Yak milk.

Kagome agreed, knowing that it was what was best for Rain and Rock. Without their mother, they would need a womanly figure in their life. Kagome made sure that at most she would only want them to call her Aunt and had no questions on whether she would be their mother. She was still a married woman and had her own son that she hoped she could return home to. She just didn't know when that would be.

3. Glorious Return

I'm surprised at the number of people that have already read my story. There is a review that I would like to address. Chibi-no-baka, I agree with you that to include the entirety of three different programs makes it too complicated. The first few chapters are merely

setting the stage. I needed to find a way for Kagome to travel fast across the world. The best way to do that would be to have her fly. Since dragons aren't suppose to exist in One Piece and only in the past of Inuyasha I needed to add How to Train Your Dragon. After a little while only references will be made. I'm sure that not everyone will agree with the solution I came up with to make it less complicated, which you'll see in this chapter, but I needed to have the dragons. They also add to a very dramatic entrance. As for Kagome rescuing Ace, while I would have loved for that to happen I felt for this story to work well with the villian I had in mind I should stick with a majority of the original plot line. Maybe I'll write another story in the future where something as you suggested happens, but it wouldn't work in this story.

Disclaimer: I do not own Inyasha, One Piece or How to Train Your Dragon. All characters and their affiliations are owned by their respective creators. I am not making money off of this work of fiction. The characters Rock and Rain do belong to me.

****A Family of Outlaws****

Chapter Two: Glorious Return

It had been nearly two decades since Akita, Kagome and Souta came to live in Berk. Rock was twenty-two and had just taken over as chief. He looked like a more rugid version of his father. Rain was almost nineteen years old. She had her father's curiosity and her mother's pension for violence. Hiccup often said she was the spitting image of her mother. In those years another Night Fury had found her way to Berk. She became the mate of Toothless and had little Night Furies. One of them bonded with Rain and was named Darkess. The two would often disappear and go exploring.

Kagome had also bonded with a dragon. She had found a Changeling injured in the forest one day. As a priestess she couldn't let any creature suffer. She used her reiki and healed it's more dangerous wounds. The dragon refused to leave her side after that. So she became known as Shadow. Souta had bonded with a Monstrous Nightmare. He named his dragon Inferno. He was also married to Ruffnut. They had a herd of little trouble makers. Akita didn't bond with any dragons, preferring to let her two children have all the excitement.

It was a normal, wintry day on Berk when the dragons started behaving strangely. The babies all gathered around their parents and the ones without young forced the humans they bonded with onto their backs and tried to fly away. Hiccup found the behavior odd, especially since Cloud Jumper and Toothless were doing the same thing. The villagers started asking questions all at once. "I don't know what's going on," Hiccup answered. "But our dragons have never been wrong before. Just let them do what they're doing and we'll see what happens."

It didn't take long for the dragons to get themselves, their young and the humans off of the island once everyone started cooperating. They flew off a few miles off of the coast of Berk.

Rain turned in her saddle to look back at her home village. What she saw surprised her. "Dad, has there always been smoke coming from the mountains behind the village?"

Hiccup also looked to see what Rain was talking about. His eyes

widened at the sight. There certainly was smoke billowing off of the island. "I don't believe it," he said. "Berk has turned into a volcano."

"It's not possible," Vilka said. "There has never been a sign of there being a volcano. Even in the old records, none make a mention of this."

"I can't explain it," Hiccup said. "It's just happening." No sooner had he finished than an eruption of molten rock spewed from the top of the mountain. "Let's get out of here." Hiccup and Toothless took the lead and flew in front. Rock and Rain were directly behind, followed by Vilka. Kagome had her mother riding with her and Souta with his family was next to them.

Every now and then Hiccup would try to land, hoping to get his bearings. Toothless wouldn't allow it, his senses telling him not to stop yet. They finally made it to the island where the previous Alpha lived, though everything was in ruins from the attack of Drago and the Dark Alpha. It was only then that Toothless and the other dragons landed for a break.

"I don't believe this," Hiccup ranted. "Eight generations gone like that."

"It's not the end Hiccup," Vilka said. "All of the villagers and dragons escaped safely. Mostly thanks to our dragons and their good senses."

"That is wonderful," Hiccup said sarcastically. "Now, what are we going to do about food and shelter?" Silence reigned over the area. "My thoughts exactly. We can't stay on this island for long. It just can't support this many people for any length of time. We have to find some other place to settle down."

"If only we could settle down in Dragon's world," Kagome muttered. "I'm sure we would all be happy." Once the words left Kagome's mouth the Shikon no Tama started to glow again. Kagome stared at it wide eyed. "After all these years," she whispered.

The people and dragons watched as the world around them faded. They soon found themselves in a lush forest with plenty of fruit bearing trees and wildlife. "Kagome, is this the East Blue?" Souta asked.

"I don't know," Kagome admitted. "I hope that we're at least back in Dragon's world." She then turned to see the people of Berk staring at her. "Don't just stand there, we need shelters and food. The men and a few women should concentrate on building shelters for everyone while the others gather supplies for food and bedding. If we're going to survive we need to work together." No one moved at first. It wasn't until Hiccup, Rock, Rain and Vilka all started doing the things ordered. Vilka and Rain disappeared into the forest, Cloud Jumper and Darkess following behind. Rock and Hiccup started gathering the supplies needed to build temporary shelters until decent homes could be built. The rest of the village quickly followed their example.

It took several days for the villagers to settle in comfortably in temporary shacks. They soon discovered that they were the only humans on this island. Said island was a tall cliff right out of the water.

It wasn't too different from what Berk had been in the past, only this time there were no rocks that made it easy to build a port and steps to the livable ground. The dragons felt right at home on the high island. They borrowed out caves along the cliffs to use as their nurseries for hatching eggs. They didn't want them exploding near the villagers.

The building of the more permanent village was underway when Kagome approached Hiccup. "I would like to go and explore the world," she said. "If we are where I think we are then I want to find my husband and son."

"I can't just let you go alone," Hiccup said.

"I'll go with her," Rain chimed in. She had been wanting to go out and explore as well.

Hiccup let out a sigh of defeat. "Fine, you may go and explore. Take a Terrible Terror with you, each of you. How long do you think you'll be gone?"

"If this is where I think it is, then the islands are pretty well spread out," Kagome informed. "I know of one place to check for sure. If they're not there, then we'll have to explore nearly blind. It could take us weeks to months before we come back."

Hiccup put a hand to his head and rubbed a headache he could feel coming on. "Okay, the two of you may go sense you both have a bond with a mystery class dragon. I don't want anyone else going though. It's too dangerous to spread ourselves thin. Don't tell anyone where you're going or what you're doing. Heaven knows I'll have a handful that will bombard me with demands of going with you. Send word once you know for sure if this is where your husband and son are Kagome. If you get into trouble then send for help. I'll have Eret and Skull Crusher lead a tracking team."

The two agreed and left. "Go and pack your gear," Kagome instructed. "We'll leave when it's darkest out."

"That's our favorite time of day." Rain left with a grin and a wave to pack. A few food rations, her weapons and armor. Of course, she would be wearing her weapons and armor.

A few hours later the two left. Once in the sky Shadow blended with the sky. To Rain, it looked Kagome was floating as she straddled a saddle. From below the saddle strap was designed to look like a bird. Since Shadow was between Kagome and what was below, none would see her. Darkess was a Night Fury. The only way anyone would notice her would be if they watched the stars carefully and noticed they would blink out and on again in a steady direction. That and as long as they didn't fly under any clouds. Once they were away from the village, Shadow became visible again.

It took them all night to reach another island. This one didn't have the high cliffs. It was also inhabited by a village. Kagome went to the scout the area while Rain guarded the dragons and stayed out of sight.

Kagome returned by mid-morning with a grin on her face. "We're in the world I was hoping for," she announced. She handed Rain a tangerine

for breakfast and dumped a sack of fish out for the dragons. "We're near a place called Kokoyashi Village. Foosha Village, where my husband and son should be, is on an island not too far from here."

"That's wonderful news," Rain grinned. She moved to her saddle bag and pulled out a blue and green Terrible Terror. She let him play around a bit and steal a fish from the bigger dragons as she wrote her report. It reminded Kagome to feed her own Terrible Terror. She took a fish from Shadow and brought it to her saddle bag. There she gave it to her orange Terrible Terror.

"Okay Swift," Rain called out. Her Terrible Terror was quickly at her side. "Head back to the village and give this letter to my father. It's very important that you stay out of sight." The little dragon flew high up into the air before heading in the direction from which they had come.

"We'll finish up with breakfast and then we'll leave," Kagome announced. "Unless you're too tired, that is."

"We still have a few hours of flight in us," Rain smirked. "I'm surprised that you're not worried about us being spotted."

"We'll be too high in the air for anyone to do anything about it anyway, unless they have devil fruit powers. If that's the case, my bow and arrow will cancel their power and we'll still be safe."

"What is a devil fruit?" Rain asked.

"It's an odd looking fruit that gives whoever eats it a certain power," Kagome answered. "I wouldn't recommend eating it though. Along with that power comes a curse. This is a world that's made up almost entirely of oceans. If you eat one of those fruits water becomes your worst enemy. It saps your strength and you can no longer swim. There's a high probability of drowning for devil fruit users."

"This is a very interesting world," Rain pointed out. "I wouldn't want to loose my ability to swim. It makes for a good landing area when I want to glide on my own."

"Yes, that armor your dad invented sure is something else. I'm sure there will be quite a few factions that will want to get their hands on that knowledge to use in their own weapons arsenal."

"I'll just have to be careful to not let it fall into the wrong hands," Rain grinned. The two finished their breakfast and were once again in the sky.

It was late in the afternoon when they reached Foosha Village. Once again, Kagome went on ahead while Rain guarded the dragons.

The first place Kagome went to was the house she shared with her mother and brother. She was hoping that Dragon made it his permanent home and raised Luffy in that house. As she broke through the trees she stopped at the sight. The house was gone and everything had been growing over. Kagome went closer to investigate. She found what was left of the foundation. It showed signs of charring. Kagome could

only surmise the house had burned down.

In defeat, Kagome headed for Foosha. When she was close enough she put on her cloak and hood. She had no idea what happened while she was away, but she wasn't going to take any chances. The first place she went was Garp's old house. She knocked on the door politely. It was opened in a few minutes.

A familiar face stood in the doorway. "Can I help you?" Makino asked.

"I hope so," Kagome said. She was trying hard to keep her voice from cracking. "Can you tell me where I can find the Monkey family Makino?"

"Do I know you?" Kagome lifted the hood back a little to let Makino see her face. Once she saw who it was, Makino pulled Kagome in by the arm and closed the door, locking it. "It's so good to see you," Makino gushed. She gave Kagome a hug and squeezed her tight. "I was so worried about you. Come on, I'm sure Garp would love to see you."

Makino dragged Kagome into the living area. Three men were lounging around, drinking tea. "I'm sorry to disturb you," Makino said. "But Garp, look who's finally come home." With that announcement she pulled the hood off of Kagome's head.

Garp dropped the teacup he had been holding. He rushed to his feet and pulled Kagome into a hug. He nearly choked the life out of her. "I'm so happy to see you're alright," he announced. He then turned to the two men in the room. They had both stood up when Garp had as a matter of courtesy.

"Boys, I want you to meet Kagome." Garp's voice was full of pride. "Kagome, these young men are training under me in the military. The one with pink hair is named Coby and the blonde is Helmeppo. Boys, Kagome is my daughter-in-law and Luffy's mother."

"WHAT!?" The jaws of both men dropped to the ground in shock and their eyes popped out.

Kagome smiled at their reaction and turned to face Garp. "Where is my son and husband?" she asked.

A pained look flashed on Garp's face. "I can't say I know where your husband is," he said. "I haven't seen him since Luffy was an infant."

"You mean he took Luffy and left?"

"No, he left Luffy with me to raise and left. He claimed to want to focus on making the world a better place for the two of you by the time you came back. As for Luffy, he left the village almost three years ago to become a pirate. Last I heard he had been on Fishman Island on his way to the second half of the Grand Line, New World."

"How long ago was that?" Kagome asked.

"We read in the paper he was there a week ago," Coby answered.

"Helmeppo and I were here to discuss permission from the Vice-Admiral to pursue Luffy."

"So, as Marine's the two of you are looking to arrest my son. What exactly has he done besides being a pirate?"

Makino, who had been silent, went to a book shelf and pulled out a scrap book. "I've been following Luffy in the paper," she announced. "I've been keeping this as a record of where's he's been."

Kagome flipped through the pages, learning of her son's ever increasing bounty to his fight with Crocodile, invading Enies Lobby, his hitting a Celestial Dragon and attacking Marineford with the Whitebeard Pirates to try to save a man he viewed as a brother, Ace. Finally she came to the article describing his magnificent return two years later.

"Thank you for showing this to me Makino," Kagome said. She then turned eyes towards Garp. "You were going to let those bastards execute my son before I got a chance to see him again?"

"He chose the life of a pirate," Garp explained. "I tried to make him join the Marines."

"Just because you're a marine doesn't make what you do right," Kagome snapped. "I've seen the so called justice that the marines hand out. You do a lot of good, it's true. But the higher in rank you get the more corrupt the system is. Dragon has the right idea, the world needs to change."

"That's treasonous talk," Helmeppo declared.

"Since when did I declare loyalty to the government?" Kagome asked.

"As a citizen born in this world your loyalty is a given," Helmeppo declared.

Kagome just smirked at him and turned to look at Makino. "I'll be heading back to where my house used to be. A friend of mine and I will be staying there until the morning. Then we'll leave and head for the New World."

"You're both welcome to stay at my place," Makino said. "I'll help you find a boat to take you to Loguetown in the morning."

"Your help is appreciated, but I can't accept. We didn't travel here by boat. We have a very unique way of traveling and I doubt that your home will have the room for our 'steeds'."

"Kagome, where have you been all this time?" Garp found himself curiously asking.

"I've been on an island called Berk. Before you ask, yes, it was in another world. It was recently destroyed by a volcano. The jewel brought my family and I back here along with the rest of the citizens of Berk. We've made a village for ourselves on an Island on the out edges of East Blue."

"Most of the islands out there are uninhabitable," Coby stated. "The

ones that do look like they can support life are nothing but sheer cliffs. People have died trying to reach the forests on the top of the islands out there."

"The people of Berk are Vikings," Kagome said. "I'll tell you what the chief once told me. They have stubbornness issues."

"Kagome, will you let me come with you to your camp?" Makino asked. "There's so much I want to talk to you about. Like where Luffy got his hat, why he wanted to be a pirate and what sort of personality he has."

"I'd love for you to come along," Kagome said. "Just stay close to me when I tell you to. You wouldn't want to be mistaken as an intruder." Kagome turned and bowed to the men in the room. "Thank you for your time gentlemen, I'm sorry to have bothered you."

"Wait Kagome," Garp put in. "I'm sorry that things ended up this way. I tried to make it so that Luffy wouldn't become an outlaw like his father."

"You tried to protect Luffy when you could," Kagome conceded. "I'll give you that much. But it isn't our place to tell our children or grandchildren what sort of life they should lead. Luffy wanted to be a pirate. He went out and made that a reality. I'll support him and his decision the best I can, by letting him make his own choices." Kagome bowed once again and left the house with Makino following.

Outside, Kagome put the the hood on over her head once again. She and Makino made a beeline for the forest and to the camp. Once they were close Kagome motioned for Makino to stop and be quiet. Makino watched in curiosity as Kagome walked a few steps off the path and stood in front of a tree.

"You can't fool me Shadow," Kagome announced. She then appeared to be petting air. Makino nearly jumped out of her skin when the air turned into a red dragon with a sort of antennae coming out of it's head. "Makino, this is my friend Shadow. She's the one that gave me a ride from New Berk to here."

Makino slowly approached at Kagome's approval. The dragon sniffed at Makino, but allowed her to get close as Kagome was allowing it. "I found Shadow badly wounded in the forest," Kagome explained. "I healed her and ever since she's been a constant companion."

"It's nice to meet you Shadow," Makino said. "What exactly is she?" Makino glanced over to Kagome.

"Shadow is a dragon of course," Kagome said. "To be specific, she's a Changeling. She can blend in with her surroundings seamlessly. I only know where she is because I can sense her."

"I thought I heard voices." The two women turned to the newcomer.

"Makino, this is Rain. Rain, this is a friend of mine before I came to Berk."

"Nice to meet you," Makino said. Rain smiled and nodded at her. "Did

you ride on Shadow to get here as well?"

"Oh no," Rain shook her head. "Darkess would have thrown a fit."

"Who's Darkess?"

"Darkess would be Rain's dragon companion," Kagome announced. "She looks vastly different from Shadow, mostly since she's a different breed of dragon. Shadow is a Changeling. Darkess is called a Night Fury."

"What the difference?" Makino asked.

"The obvious answer would be color and speed," Rain said. "I'm not trying to be rude. Darkess is roughly half the size of Shadow. But what she lacks in size she makes up for in speed. Plus, she's pure black, which allows her to blend with the night sky. That's why we call her breed Night Furies."

"Does she hide like Shadow?" Makino nervously glanced around.

"No," Rain answered. The three then continued the short walk into the clearing where Rain and Kagome first landed. "Darkess can't change the color of her scales to blend in like a Changeling can. She can blend with the night sky and move at incredible speeds so that it's hard to find her and even harder to shoot at her."

When they entered the clearing the first thing that Makino saw was a solid black shape in the middle of bright green grass. "That would be Darkess," Rain announced. "She's a nocturnal dragon, so us flying around most of the night and day has really tired her out. She's been sleeping there shortly after you left Aunt Kagome."

"Aunt Kagome? Are you Souta's daughter?"

"No she's not," Kagome answered. "I practically raised Rain and her brother Rock. Their mother was killed in a raid. This was right after I was taken away from Luffy and Dragon. Since Rain was still a newborn and I was the only female around lactating her father asked me to care for her and her older brother. In exchange we could live in Berk."

"Her father has that much power?"

"My father was the chief of the village at the time," Rain announced proudly. "Now my brother is the chief. Well, he was until the original Berk was destroyed. Father took control again to ease everyones fears. Although he did make sure that Rock had a part in every decision that was made."

"It sounds like you all had it rough recently," Makino commented.

"It was hard," Rain agreed. "However, it's worth it if Aunt Kagome can be reunited with her family. Speaking of which, did you find them?"

Kagome sadly shook her head. "I have a vague idea where to look for Luffy," she said. "Dragon, I have no idea how to find him."

"Make the headlines," Makino announced. "Find a reporter and claim to be Luffy's mother and Dragon's wife. They won't pass up such an exclusive story. It will make the front page in no time. Luffy will probably read it, but Dragon definately will. He's the leader of the Revolutionary Army. It's in his best interest to keep up with the news."

"That's a great idea," Kagome grinned. "Is there a reporter in Foosha that could get me on the front page?"

"No there isn't," Makino said. "We have a reporter, but it's local news only. We're too small to make the world paper."

"Where would you suggest we go?"

"Alabasta," Makino announced confidently. "There are reporters of note between here and there. Alabasta, however, holds Luffy in high regards. They won't report the mother and wife of two notorious outlaws to the marines until it's far too late to do anything."

"I love you Makino," Kagome announced. She gave her friend a tight hug. "You really have kept an eye on Luffy from a distance. I couldn't have asked for a better friend."

"I would do anything for Luffy," Makino said. "He was such a cute kid and he's become a virtuous young man, always doing what he believes is right. Not once has he harmed an innocent person."

"You don't know how happy that makes me to hear that," Kagome smiled. "Well, tell me more about what Luffy was like growing up while I get dinner started. I want to hear everything." The women talked through the rest of the day and late into the night.

Morning came and Makino had to say 'good-bye'. By this time Darkess was awake. It surprised Makino on how cat-like she behaved for a dragon. It was cute and endearing in a way. Of course, when she said that to Rain it was explained to her that most dragons didn't attack unless they were provoked. At least the ones that lived on Berk. Their main diet was fish and sometimes a chicken or two when given to them. Makino was very happy to hear that since Darkess was a very friendly dragon and didn't mind showing it. It did freak her out a bit when she tried to share her breakfast. Rain had laughed and explained that she needed to show the dragons that she already had food.

Just before they left, Kagome wrote a report to Hiccup and sent her Terrible Terror off. "Should we head back to pick up more Terrors?" Rain asked. "I know that Swift will eventually return. He and Darkess are hardly separated."

"If you're positive Swift will be back then we don't need to," Kagome said. "I just wonder if he'll be able to catch up soon."

"If we keep a steady, non-exhausting pace, then he will most likely catch up in a day or two." Rain finished tying her saddle back on Darkess. "Of course, I'm talking about Shadow's pace. Swift is used to Darkess. He'll use whatever trick he can to try and catch up. It won't take him very long."

"That's good to hear," Kagome said. "I want him to know the results of my interview with the reporter and if it gets me closer to my family. That, and I want to keep my family posted. Do you think that your father has told them what's going on?"

"The rest of the village has most definately noticed we're missing at this point," Rain said. "Father would have to at least tell Eret what's going on so that he doesn't use Skull Crusher's tracking ability to chase us down and drag us home."

"That's very true," Kagome agreed. The women said one last 'good-bye' to Makino and were up in the air. They flew in the direction of the Grand Line.

"Once we're there we'll have to get a Lock Post or an Eternal Post to Alabasta. Otherwise we'll become extremely lost."

"What about our compasses?" Rain asked.

"They won't work on the Grand Line. All of the islands have a magnetic field that interfere with a normal compass. We'll be fine as long as we can get a Lock Post. I'll see if I can get one in Loguetown. It's the last village before we reach the Grand Line. They're bound to have one."

It took four days to reach Loguetown, stopping to rest on islands along the way to rest and eat. Swift had found them two days prior. Kagome once again was the one to go to the town. She was the only one that knew what they were looking for. Rain was getting bored not going into the towns, but someone needed to make sure the dragons weren't spotted. Not that they were worried about Shadow. Darkness, on the other hand, was easily spotted during the day. Kagome was in and out of the town as fast as she could. She was eager to reach Alabasta and let her husband and son know she was back.

"I found an Eternal Post," Kagome announced upon her return to camp. "I bought that along with a regular Lock Post. Once we reach the Grand Line we'll head immediately in the direction of Alabasta."

"Sounds like someone is eager to piss off the government," Rain joked. It was fun to pick on her motherly figure. For the first time Rain was supporting her instead of the other way around.

A few more days of travel finally landed them in Alabasta. Kagome learned that the people viewed her son and his crew, yes his crew, as heroes. Kagome was proud, her son followed the path of honor as well as being a captain. It didn't take long for the Alabasta palace to hear of a woman asking questions of the Straw Hat crew, their captain specifically.

On the third day in Alabasta as Kagome entered the town she was approached by soldiers. She greeted them politely when they stopped in front of her. Off to the side she noticed a person taking pictures. "You there," she called out. "Are you a reporter for this kingdom?"

"I am," the blonde girl in a brown blazer with a brown hat answered.

"How would you like an interview with the mother of Straw Hat Luffy?" The entire village was stunned into silence.

"Do you have proof that he's your son?" The captain of the soldier group asked.

"Do you have proof that you have a child?" Kagome charged back. "I'm not trying to trick anyone. I just want to let my son know I'm alive and looking for him and his father."

"I would love an interview," the reporter ran into the group. "Can I take pictures along with?"

"I wouldn't have it any other way."

4. Shocking the Nation

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****A Family of Outlaws****

Chapter Three: Shocking the Nation

In Foosha Village a flock of birds was startled from their sleep by shouting. "Is she out of her mind!?" Garp was in his sitting room with a paper in his hand. On the front page was a picture of Kagome. The article described her as the mother of Straw Hat Luffy and how she was looking for him to reunite. She made the announcement that she would be traveling to the New World to look for him there.

"She's giving the Marines an open invitation to use her as bait," Garp growled. "I know that she was angry with me, but this is insane."

"I don't know about that," Makino smiled. "When she and her young friend left they proved that it would be quite impossible for the Marines to catch them, let alone catch up."

"It says here that they're in Alabasta," Garp read and paused. He looked deep in thought for a moment. "She was here just a little over a week ago. Even the fastest naval vessel can't travel that fast."

"Nope, they sure can't."

Garp's eyes shifted to look at Makino. "What exactly do you know?" he asked.

"You won't tell the Marine's?"

"I'm retired Makino," Garp stated. "I hardly owe them an explanation to who I have as a guest in my house to begin with."

"They're flying."

"Flying? You mean they have a balloon or something?"

"No, I mean that dragons exist and Kagome and her friend are traveling that way."

Garp was silent for a moment. He stood and headed for the door. "Is it time for you to open the bar yet?" he asked.

"No, why?"

"I find myself in need of a strong drink."

~ A bar in the Sabaody Archipelago. An elderly man with a scar over his right eye was laughing loudly, nearly falling off of his stool. On the counter in front of him lay the paper. It showed a picture of Kagome and the article.

A woman with short black hair stared at the image with a smile. "So Monkey's mother is just as flamboyant," she smirked. "I'm becoming a fan of the entire family."

~ On a clownish looking ship. "Straw Hat's mother is coming to the New World!? What kind of family announces their moves so boldly to the government?" The speaker was a man with a clown nose and clown make-up.

"So that's my future mother-in-law," a woman wearing a cowboy hat with curly black hair said.

"Keep dreaming Alvida," the clown said. "I'll kill that Straw Hat one day."

"Now look who's dreaming Buggy."

~ On the top layers of Water 7 in the executive office of Galley La. "I've brought you some tea and the morning paper Mr. Iceburg." A woman wearing a business suit came in carrying a tray. "I think you'll find today's edition interesting."

A man in a striped suit with blue hair picked up the paper in interest. He started smiling as he read. "Luffy just resurfaced, causing a stir. Now his mother makes an entrance."

~ On the Island of Amazon Lilly. "So that's my mother-in-law," Boa Hancock, the pirate empress, stated. "She looks almost like my darling husband."

"I've told you before Princess, just because Straw Hat hugged you, it doesn't mean you're married."

~ On Newkama Land there was quite a stir. "I never realized Dragon married Sweetling!" Ivankov was pacing back and forth.

"I suspected as much when Luffy said Leader was his father. Kagome was the only woman I knew of that he had regarded with any emotion beyond companions," Inazuma spoke. "That paper merely confirms the suspicions I've had."

"You didn't share this news, why?"

"I had no proof. It was merely a speculation up until now."

~ On the Thousand Sunny a few miles away from the kingdom of Dressrosa. "We need to hurry to Zou," a red head woman announced. "That's where Tra-guy said to meet with his crew."

"What about Luffy and the others Nami?" a talking reindeer asked. "We can't just leave them."

"We'll have to trust them Chopper," a blonde man in a black suit said. "Luffy isn't one to give up. They'll meet up with us when they're finished. Wouldn't you agree Brook?"

"Yohohohoho! There's nothing to worry about," a moving skeleton said. "It's just like Sanji says."

Off in the corner of the deck and man wearing a pink lab coat sat with shackles on his hands and feet. A news bird dropped the morning paper in front of him. He picked it up, hoping to find that Luffy and the other Straw Hat crew members were defeated by Doflamingo. He began to read the first article.

A shout of surprise drew the attention of everyone on deck. "What's all that racket?" Sanji asked. He sauntered over and took the paper from their captive. He glanced at the picture. Hearts were instantly in his eyes. "That's a beautiful woman," he cried.

Brook was immediately at his side along with the child, Momonosuke. During the ruckus Nami came up and pulled the paper from their grasp. "What is all the commotion about? Let's see: '_Breaking news! A family member of Straw Hat Luffy speaks out.'_" Silence followed after Nami read the headline. Now filled with curiosity, she continued to read. " '_Here in the Kingdom of Alabasta a woman came forth and spoke out. She announced that she was the mother of Straw Hat Luffy and the wife of the Revolutionary Leader Dragon. Monkey-Higarashi Kagome has expressed her desire to locate her son and husband at any cost. She's aware that Straw Hat and his crew have been spotted heading for the New World. She plans to head there with her one companion and find her son. Shortly after she hopes to find her husband.'_"

"That's Luffy's Mom?" Chopper asked. He looked at the picture that Nami was showing him. "I can see a family resemblance."

"Such a gorgeous woman is Luffy's mother?" Sanji dramatically asked. "I refuse to believe it."

"Same here," Brook announced.

~ "Now here's something interesting captain." A portly man approached a slouching figure. "Our young friend, Luffy, is still full of surprises." The man took a bite out of the chicken leg he was eating. "There's an interesting article about him in the paper again. This time it's regarding a family member of his." He handed the paper to the slouched figure. As the man read the article the portly man grinned. "Apparently Luffy inherited his subtlety from his mother."

The slouched figure started laughing. His head of shocking red hair flashing in the light. Three scars running down his left eye giving

him a rugged look. "It would seem that Luffy makes waves even when he's not trying to."

~ "Leader! Leader!" A young teen was running through the halls of the Revolutionary Headquarters. "Leader, you need to see today's paper!" The boy burst into the conference room. "I'm sorry to interrupt the meeting, but this is really important. There's an article here about a woman named Kagome and she claims..."

"Let me see that," Dragon interrupted. He took the paper from the startled boy and began to read. He slumped down into the nearest vacant chair. He surprised his war leaders the next moment as tears started flowing down his cheeks. "She's finally come home."

"We'll reconvene the meeting later," one of the war leaders announced. "Take as long as you need leader. We can continue this meeting when you're ready." The group of people left, leaving Dragon alone in the room with the paper.

Dragon stood and headed out to the balcony. "I can't come find you right now," he whispered. "But if you should find Luffy soon Sabo is with him. I've told Sabo all about you. He will know from your looks alone that you're Luffy's mother. He'll bring you to me as soon as he can."

~ High in the sky Rain was laying down on Darkess' back. She held a paper in her hand. Kagome was close by, ready to help her with words when needed. Rain was steadily learning to read the alphabet and characters of this world. She would need it in order to survive.

"It's almost like you're daring the Marines," Rain commented. She glanced over to look at Kagome. The woman had a smirk on her face. "Oh I see, you want to see what they'll do first. You're not just daring them, you're mocking them. You're declaring that supporters of your son and husband are here and growing by the day. It lacks subtlety, but you've always spoken your mind. It's not in you to back down."

"This is also the fastest way to find my boys," Kagome said. "I might have challenged the Marines, but we've already long since past the area where they'll start looking for us. On top of that, they'll be looking for a small two person boat. They wouldn't think to look in the sky for a couple of dragons."

"My question is, how pissed off is the Marines going to be?"

"Very."

"Oh that's reassuring."

~ At Naval Headquarters. "Find this Monkey-Higarashi woman immediately," Fleet Admiral Akainu ordered. "We can't allow her to meet up with Straw Hat or Dragon. The moral of outlaws everywhere will increase. We'll have another outbreak of criminals thinking that they can make it big. I want her imprisoned in Impel Down as soon as you have her in custody."

"On what charges sir?" a voice over a transponder snail

asked.

"Aiding and abetting known criminals."

"There's no proof of that sir."

"Are you questioning me?"

"No sir."

"Then do as I order."

"Yes sir."

The Transponder Snail made the noise of the connection being cut off. "Once she's in custody both Dragon and Straw Hat will make a move," Akainu muttered to himself. "She'll be the bait we need to lure those two in."

5. Dressrosa

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****A Family of Outlaws****

Chapter Four: Dressrosa

Rain was thoroughly impressed with this island. It was one giant Mangrove tree. Although the people of the area seemed to be a bit simple. They bowed down to any that looked like they might hold even a small amount of power. It was disgusting to watch, really. Ever since the news release that morning, it was Rain's duty to scope out the villages and gather supplies. It wasn't as exciting as she had hoped. There was no real challenge in it.

Rain wasn't too far out of the building area when she was surrounded by a group of thugs. She raised an eyebrow at them.

"You'll fetch a good price," the largest said. Rain focused her attention on him. "With your looks you could be worth a lot of money. That weird get up of yours has to go though."

Rae set down her small bag of daily provisions. She pulled a small cylindrical device from her hip. "I strongly recommend that you leave me in peace," she announced. "I'm not opposed to making all of you eat dirt."

"You'll have to learn to keep that mouth shut though," he growled.

Rain was about to charge when all of the men suddenly fell to the ground. They were all knocked out by something. Rain looked around her and found a man sitting on a branch above them. He had gray hair and a white cloak. He was too far away for Rain to get more details than that.

The man made his way down and stood in front of Rain. "Not many would have looked up to find the enemy," he commented.

"Not many fight from above," Rain returned.

"So where are you headed?"

"I'm going back to camp."

"Camp? You're not going back to your ship or to a hotel?"

"The village is out of the question," Rain answered. She picked up her sack of provisions. "We don't need a ship to get where we're going."

"You don't need a ship?" the man asked. "How do you get around? Do you fly?"

"Yup."

"You're joking."

"Nope."

"How do you fly?"

"Very carefully."

"In what manner do you fly?"

"In a pretzel position trying to kiss my behind 'good-bye'."

"Are you always this evasive?"

"Are you always this nosey?" The two stared at each other for awhile. "You plan on following me don't you?" The old man let out a smirk. Rain just shrugged and started walking again. "It's your funeral."

As the two walked, Rain kept glancing at the old man that was following her. "What's the sudden interest in me?" she asked.

"You didn't cower in fear from those slave traders," the man answered. "There's not many that go out of these villages alone unless they're confident in their skills or they do have back up."

"My backup is still a few minutes out," Rain answered.

"Aren't you worried I might be a slave trader as well?"

"Aren't you worried that I am?"

"You have a way of twisting peoples questions around, don't you?"

"It's a gift." Rain stopped at a particular root system. "So unless you want to get attacked, it's time to part ways."

"Don't worry about me," the man announced. "I'm faster than I

look."

"Alright, since you saved me back there I can help you out here." Rain rounded the root and faced the camp Kagome set up while she was getting the supplies. She maneuvered so that she directly in front of the old man.

Said man was stunned for a moment. The woman that claimed to be Luffy's mother was in front of him. Also, a red dragon and a pitch black one were lounging. The black one immediately put it's head into the air and looked in their direction. It ran at the two of them with a speed normal animals didn't posses.

"I warned you," Rain called. She then let the dragon past and it started sniffing the man. It sat in front of him expectantly.

"Um, you're Monkey-Higarashi Kagome, correct?" The man was trying to move around Darkess at this point. "My name is Silver Rayleigh. I trained your son for two years."

Rayleigh relaxed when the dragon moved away from him to get to the fish that was offered. "That's a very curios dragon you have there," Rayleigh said.

"You don't know the half of it," Kagome agreed. "I assume you told me that about Luffy for a reason?"

"After his surragate brother was killed I took him in and trained him for two years. I wanted to let you know I have an idea on where you can look for him and his crew."

"Do you know anything about my husband?"

"I'm sorry, but I don't." Rayleigh then proceeded to tell Kagome all the training Luffy had received and how much stronger he had grown.

"He's still a bit on the carefree side though," Rayleigh admitted. "I can't train that out of people no matter how hard I try."

"I wouldn't expect you to," Kagome said. "Apparently it's what draws people to him. So, what can you tell me about where to start looking?"

"There are a few islands close to where he would come out of Fishman Island from," Rayleigh began. "One of them is too dangerous for life, so I doubt that they would stop there. The most populated village in the area is the kingdom of Dressrosa. I doubt he would go there since it's ruled by a Pirate Warlord. But there are a few other islands to check on."

"Do you happen to have a map?" Rain approached Rayleigh and Kagome.

"There's one I keep in storage back at the bar where I stay," Rayleigh said. "I don't usually carry one one me all the time."

"I think I have somthing that will help." Kagome pulled out a sketch pad. "I drew this of the Red Line to show Rain where we are. Maybe you could point out some general areas on where these islands

are?"

Rayleigh pointed to areas that could be of potential interest.

"Dressrosa is the only one within flying distance of here without stopping on the Red Line," Kagome announced. "It's not even an hour's flight from here so I would not stop on the Red Line. We will head for Dressrosa and see what we see. We'll stop if we can land without being seen. If not, then we'll have to fly to the next island."

"Well, I did give you my advice and opinion," Rayleigh said. "What you choose to do with it from this point on is your own affair."

"Thank you for your generosity," Kagome said. "I'll certainly remember your kindness." Rayleigh nodded as he disappeared behind the roots. Kagome turned to Rain at that point. "Let's have a quick lunch and then get back in the air. Something about this place just doesn't feel right."

"Beyond the fact that slavers jumped me and tried to sell me for their greedy pockets?"

"They did what now?"

~ It took only a few hours to reach the island where Dressrosa was located. The sight that met Kagome and Rain astounded them. What appeared to be a giant bird cage surrounded the island as meteorites fell from the sky only to be sliced to shreds on impact.

"It must be the power of a devil fruit," Kagome announced. "We can't touch it or it will cut us, by the looks of things."

"Didn't you say that you could stop that sort of power?"

"How will I do that without them noticing?"

Rain pointed to the meteorites that were still falling. "We fly as close to those as our dragons are comfortable with. You shoot an arrow along the path they're taking. It would look like the meteors finally breeched the cage instead of an arrow."

"That's brilliant," Kagome praised. "Alright then, let's get to it." Shadow and Darkess rose up higher as they moved closer to the path of the meteorites. When they were close enough they angled their bodies to glide downwards, parallel to the meteorites. As the cage got closer Kagome drew her bow and notched an arrow. "Hit the mark," she chanted.

The arrow flew through the sky. It hit the cage the same moment as a particularly large meteorite did. The cage dissolved in a bright flash of pink. "You and Shadow should hide yourselves," Rain called. "I'm sure there are plenty of people looking up. Darkess and I will increase speed and hide somewhere. We'll meet up with you."

"How will you find us?" Kagome asked.

"I'll just look for a large amount of flowers being smushed without there being anything there."

Kagome laughed and finally agreed. She then tossed something at Rain. It was a small charm. "I've purified and blessed it," Kagome explained. "It should protect you from devil fruit users for a short time."

"Thank you," Rain nodded. "We'll find you as soon as we can." Darkess folded her wings closer to her body and the two drastically increased their speed towards the ground. Shadow changed the colors of her scales to reflect the environment around her. The two were quickly blending in with the buildings.

Rain and Darkess were flying through the city. There was so much chaos and fighting going on that no one bothered to notice the dragon that was among them. "What is going on here?" she asked herself. They headed to where there was the most commotion.

A large battle was taking place on a hill leading to the palace. The two edged closer as Rain noticed one phrase being said time and again. "Help Straw Hat reach the palace."

"How do you like that for convenient?" Rain asked Darkess. The dragon looked up at her partner. "Now we have ourselves a party." Darkess gave a nod of her head as she flipped in the sky and headed back towards the group.

"REBECCA!"

The shout drew the attention of both dragon and rider. A woman wearing scantily designed armor was falling from a cliff. "Time to play hero," Rain mused as Darkess rushed to the falling body.

The two were nearly to the paved ground when Darkess extended her wings and rose back into the air. Rain looked over the side to see the girl staring up at the dragon in horror. "You can relax," Rain called out. "She won't hurt you. Where do you want us to drop you off at?"

The girl blinked at Rain for a minute. She then shook her head to clear it. "Did you hear a person call out my name?" she asked.

"Is your name Rebecca?"

"It is."

"Then yes, we heard it."

"I need to join him and his crew. I have something that they really need."

"You heard her Darkess, back into the fray." Darkess changed directions abruptly once again. The three of them headed back in the direction of the palace. On the third layer of the hill was a group of people fighting off a creepy looking guy with red stripes on his face and a black coat.

"That man in Diamonte," Rebecca announced. "He's the one that threw me off the cliff."

"Is that right?" An evil grin spread across Rain's features. "Darkess, wait for a clear shot then use Plasma Blast." Once the

people around him backed away from Diamonte a whistling noise sounded from within Darkess' mouth.

~ "I'll kill you for what you did to Rebecca," Luffy announced.

"Now's not the time to get angry Straw Hatter," Law announced. He was still unable to move due to the sea stone cuffs on his wrists. "You can't win against him unless you think with a clear head."

Anything else that would have been said died as everyone heard a whistling sound. "Is that coming from one of Mingo's guys?" Luffy asked.

"I've never heard of anyone with a power that gave off a whistling sound," Law admitted. "I wouldn't rule that out though."

A ball of white and blue fire slammed into Diamonte at that moment, also causing the whistling to stop. "Or it was something else," Law conceded.

"Lucy!"

Luffy, Robin, Bortolomeo, Cavendish and Law looked to the sound of Rebecca's voice. They all could hardly believe it. She was being carried by a black dragon. The dragon eased her down and didn't let go until she had solid footing. Once she was on her own the dragon moved away and landed on the hill with them as well. A woman wearing dark brown leather armor and a helmet that hid her face jumped off of the creature's back.

"Are you hurt anywhere?" she asked Rebecca.

"I'm fine, thank you for saving me. I didn't catch your name."

"My name is Rain and this is Darkess." The dragon sat up on it's hind legs and looked down on everyone. It gave a nod of what appeared to be greeting.

"That is so cool," Luffy exclaimed. "Can it do tricks?"

"She's not a dog," Rain said. "She's a Night Fury and daughter of the Alpha Dragon. She doesn't do tricks on command." Luffy's expression took on a confused look at that. "But she does shake hands."

Almost immediately Luffy was excited again. He ran up the the dragon and asked to shake hands. Darkess grumbled a bit and growled in Rain's direction. She eventually relented and shook Luffy's hand.

"Rebecca, do you have the key to Law's cuffs?" Robin asked.

"Yes, it's right here." Rebecca hurried over to Law to release him.

"You're Monkey D. Luffy right?" Rain asked.

"Yeah, I'm going to be King of the Pirates," Luffy answered.

"I can't believe this," Rain cheered. "She's going to burst into

flames when she finds out that I found you first."

Robin was immediately on the defensive. "Just who is looking for Luffy?" she asked.

"His mother of course."

6. Son Meets Mother

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I will be the first to say this, I'm not a big fight scene writer. Fight scenes will be short or all together skipped. I'll will try my best to make it interesting, just to let all of you know why some things are missing.

Also, I can't make up my mind on pairings or not and who to put with whom. Kagome and Dragon are a given. I've been debating on if I want Rain to be in a relationship with anyone. Since Rock is a minor character I've been debating on that as well. Suggestion will be welcome though you should keep in mind that I need to be inspired in the match. If I try to force the story out it turns out badly. The last thing I want to do is insult readers by giving them a half asked job.

****A Family of Outlaws****

Chapter Five: Son Meets Mother

Rain lifted the helmet off as everyone stood there in stunned silence. Rebecca had even paused in removing Law's handcuffs in her shock. Rain grinned at everyone as she watched all their expressions. The long haired blonde man, who Rain was sure was having a gender crisis, had a look of horror on his features. The green haired man with sharp teeth had stars in his eyes. The woman with black hair was blinking at her as she tried to process the information. Rebecca had her mouth open as the man she was trying to release only widened his eyes. Luffy stood there with no expression on his face.

Rain glanced over to Darkess. Darkess moved her shoulders in an shrugging fashion. She made a noise in her throat that resembled 'I don't know'.

Over the cacophony of noise in the city a single shouted word was heard. "WHAT!?"

"Oh my," Robin put a hand to her cheek. "This is quite unexpected."

Bortolomeo was suddenly in Rain's face. "Are you part of Luffy-senpai's family?" he asked.

"In a manner of speaking," Rain admitted. "Lady Kagome saved my life when I was a few days old. She helped my father raise my brother, Rock and I. We owe a lot to her and her family."

"Who is Lady Kagome?" Law asked. He was rubbing his wrists now that they were free of the cuffs.

"She's Luffy's mother," Rain said. "She and Shadow are around here somewhere."

"Who is Shadow?" Cavendish asked.

"That's her dragon."

"MY MOM HAS A DRAGON!? THAT'S SOOOOO COOOOOL!"

~ Kagome was able to watch Rain and Darkess fly through the city. They did a good job at not being noticed at first. Kagome shook her head when she watched the two of them jump right into the fray to save a girl that was falling. "I suppose I should have known," she sighed. "It's in her family's blood to be right in the middle of things." She leaned forward and patted Shadow on the shoulder. "What do you say we lend a hand? If the two of them picked a side then they have good reasons."

Shadow snorted in agreement and started to glide closer to the city. Shadow held her ability to blend in as they soared above the fighting crowds. The wind knocking a few down in their wake. The closer they got to the hill, the fiercer the fighting became. A collapsing Colloseum was just ahead of them. It was surrounded by Marines. Kagome cursed her luck at that.

She started to steer Shadow away when a whole group of them was knocked away. "I don't have time to play with you marines," a young blonde man shouted. "I have to find my brother and the person who brought down that cage."

"You fool," a lowly marine snapped. "It was Admiral Fujitora that brought down the cage."

"I didn't do it," an older, blind man said. He had scars across both of his eyes. "My meteorites had no effect on Doflomingo's trap."

"Exactly right," the blonde said. "There was a pink flash before the cage came down. I've heard of that power before. It was described to me in great detail. I need to find the person that did that and find out how they came to have that ability."

"You can just ask her now," Fujitora said. He nodded his head in Kagome's direction.

The marines in the area and the blonde looked in the area indicated. "Admiral, there's no one there," one of the marines said.

"There's someone there," Fujitora insisted. "Don't think that because I'm blind I can't see. There's a large creature in that area and a woman is on it's back. They must be on top of a building or something."

"You're partially right," Kagome responded. She gave Shadow the signal to reveal herself. The moment that they allowed themselves to come into view several people fell to the ground. "It would be more accurate to say that we were flying."

"Admiral, it's an actual dragon." Panic started to spread among the ranks. The marines started to flee the area in a rush. The only ones that stayed was the Admiral, the blonde man and a man in a mask that was knocked out.

Shadow landed in front of them. Kagome jumped down to the ground, her bow at the ready. "I wasn't intending on facing the marines just yet."

"Oh," Admiral Fujitora sounded intrigued. "Is there a reason you would say that?"

"Has anyone told you what this morning's paper had to say?" Kagome asked.

"We've been busy fighting," the blonde said. "I don't think any press birds have come this way."

"Then forget that I said anything," Kagome smiled. "If you'll excuse me, I really must be on my way. I'm sure that my friend is getting herself into a mess of trouble at this point."

"Who are you?" Fujitora asked.

"Just a priestess passing through," Kagome dismissed.

The blonde stiffened at this point. "Wait just a moment, there's something that I need to ask you." He moved closer to Kagome, keeping an eye on Fujitora. "I was hoping you could give me your name."

"My name is Kagome."

"I KNEW IT!" The blonde jumped in the air in his excitement.

Kagome blinked a few times at the young man. He stopped and grinned sheepishly. "Um, my name is Sabo and I'm the Chief of Staff for the Revolutionary Army." Kagome sucked in a breath of air. Hope started to rise in her and nearly choked the life out of her. "I'm the second in command also. Leader has told me all about you Kagome."

"Sabo, do you think..."

"You don't need to ask," Sabo grinned. "I'll personally take you to see Dragon as soon as I'm finished helping Luffy."

"Luffy's here?"

"He's heading to the palace." Kagome looked in the direction that Sabo pointed and started laughing. "Is there something funny?"

"That's the direction my companion flew off in," Kagome said. "I'm sure she'll bump into Luffy before we can get there."

"Your dragon seems pretty strong and fast," Sabo complimented. "I'm sure if you give me a lift we'll be there in no time."

"I won't just let you leave," Fujitora cut in. "I have orders to arrest any revolutionists. I'm afraid I'll have to take you into

custody."

Kagome took out an arrow and notched it. "I really don't want to harm you," she said. "Just allow us to leave peacefully and I'll let you leave without any trouble."

Fujitora's brow furrowed as he drew his sword. "I can't allow him to leave," he said. "I have very strict orders."

Kagome started to pour reiki into the arrow. She aimed it at the ground at Fujitora's feet. "I won't hurt you," she said. "But I can't allow you to stop us from leaving."

"Then we have reached an impasse," Fujitora stated. He started to move towards the two. Kagome released her arrow and it missed Fujitora's foot by an inch.

"You didn't hit him," Sabo stated.

"I wasn't trying to," Kagome explained. "Just a residual amount is enough to accomplish my goal."

Fujitora pointed his sword to the two. He stopped and looked confused. Sabo immediately recognized that something was wrong. "What did you do?" he asked.

"I have a unique ability," Kagome said. "It allows me to cancel out the powers of a devil fruit user without actually hurting them." She climbed onto the Shadow's saddle followed by Sabo. Shadow lifted into the air and started for the hill.

Fujitora was left standing there alone. He sheathed his sword so that it looked like a cane again. He felt his way over to his subordinate. Fujitora lifted Issho over one shoulder and slowly started to make his way back to the ship.

~ Rain had a perplexed look on her face. Of all things for Luffy to be excited over she wasn't expecting that it would be because Kagome bonded with a dragon.

"Do you think she'll take me on a ride?" Luffy asked excitedly.

"You can count on it," Rain said. She was still trying to get over Luffy's abrupt change of attitude.

"That's our captain for you," Robin said. "His excitement is quite infectious."

"So that's what you call it?" Rain asked. Rebecca giggled into her hand. "What's the goal here?" Rain decided to change the subject.

"We need to get Luffy to the top of the hill," Robin informed. "He will face Doflamingo and Leo will free his princess."

"Who's Leo?"

A small person perched itself on Rebecca's shoulder. "I'm Leo of the Tontatta Kingdom on Green Bit," he proudly announced.

"It's a pleasure to meet you," Rain greeted.

"You're not freaked out by a small person?" Cavendish asked.

"I ride a dragon. Plus, I've seen stranger things before."

"Such as?"

"Just let me say, if you see a dragon eating and you happen to be friends with it make sure that you have food in your hands." Rain started to head back to Darkess. "We can give Luffy and Leo a ride to the top. It'll only take a few seconds." Just as Rain settled into the saddle Luffy was behind her, Leo on his shoulder.

"I thought you weren't going to show yourself."

The wind started to pick up around the group. "You're not fooling anyone Auntie," Rain grinned. She was looking at a certain spot in the sky. "Shadow's working a little harder to be carrying only one rider."

The image of a red dragon came into view out of nowhere. On the back was Sabo and Kagome. "That's not fair," Luffy complained. "Sabo got to ride the bigger dragon."

Rain cleared her throat, "Luffy, your mom; Kagome, your son." Rain gestured with her hands to the respective person. Rain looked to the side when she heard a choking sound. Bortolomeo was off to the side. He once again had stars in his eyes, except now he had tears streaming down his cheeks. Rain gave him a strange look as she leaned away.

"You'll get used to it," Cavendish said. "He has an obsession with Straw Hat and his crew. To come face to face with one of Straw Hat's parents would be a bit overwhelming."

"Luffy," Kagome smiled down. "I'm so happy to see you. Right now, though, is not the time to have a family reunion."

"Darkess and I were going to take Luffy to face the head honcho of this mess," Rain explained.

Kagome nodded to the group. "Then you should hurry," she said. "Rain, stay close to Luffy. If it looks like it will be needed, use that amulet."

Rain nodded and gestured to Darkess. "You might want to hold on tight Luffy," she said.

Luffy grabbed Rain's shoulders as Darkess spread her wings out. "What amulet are you talking about..." Luffy's breath was stolen as Darkess shot up into the sky. The ground getting smaller in a flash.

Shadow took the space that Darkess once stood. "How the heck did they do that?" Sabo asked.

"Rain's dragon, Darkess, is a Night Fury," Kagome began. "She's a bit smaller than Shadow's breed, which is a Changeling. Although, Night Furies are notorious for their speed and agility. A Changeling can blend seamlessly in with their environment. They also have a venom

that can melt steal plated armor right off of any warrior."

"Is speed the only thing that a Night Fury is good for?" Law asked.

"They have a breath attack as well," Kagome pointed out. "It's not fire, like you expect most dragons. We call it a Plasma Blast. If this was night you would have a hard time finding Darkess in the sky. Every dragon has their secret."

"They're in the palace already," Rebecca stated. She had been watching them since they took off. "I hope that Leo can free Princess Mansherry."

"He'll be fine," Robin soothed. "He's with Luffy after all."

~ Darkess ran through the halls of the palace. There were several soldiers chasing after them and yelling, but they weren't fast enough. "Turn left here," Leo gave directions.

Darkess took the turn so sharply that Luffy's head stretched in the direction they had been heading before it came back to normal. He let out an excited laugh. "This is great," he announced. Darkess glanced up at him and gave a smile full of sharp teeth.

"It's the room straight ahead," Leo announced.

There was a group of four soldiers standing in front of the door. They were obviously shaking in fear. Rain added to it by calling, "You guys do know that dragons are carnivorous, right?" Since they showed no signs of stopping the four guards fled the area.

Darkess blasted the door open and leapt through the now opened door. She came to a stop in the middle of the room. "That's the cage they have the princess in," Leo announced.

"Is that you Leo?" a small voice asked.

"It's me Princess," Leo confirmed. He leapt off of Luffy's shoulder. He held onto the bars of the cage that was hollowed out in the wall, several feet above the ground. "Are you alright?"

"I want to go home," the princess wailed.

Leo tried to pull the bars of the cage apart. "I'll get it Leo," Luffy announced. He grabbed the bars and then slumped to the floor.

"What is wrong with you?" Rain asked.

"The bars must be made out of sea prism stones," Leo announced. "They sap the strength out of devil fruit users."

Rain nodded her head in understanding. She silently got out of the saddle and walked over. She examined the lock for a second. "It's time like these where you need a little ingenuity." Rain pulled a cylindrical device off of her right hip. She pointed one end at the lock. When she pressed a button a thick green gas flowed into and around the lock. She stopped before the gas could spread very much further. "You might want to close your eyes Princess," she informed.

"This is going to be bright for a second." Rain hit another button on the object which caused it to spark. The spark ignited the gas that was hovering around the lock.

Once the smoke was clear, Rain started to work at the lock. It gave away without too much effort. The door of the cage swung open with ease. A female dwarve rushed out and tackled Leo.

"What was that?" Luffy asked.

"It was the fumes from a Sickleback," Rain started to explain. "It's a dragon with two heads. One head produces a flammable gas while the other lights it. The gas also doubles as a toxin if you inhale too much. It burns so hot and fast that it melted the insides of that lock."

"Thank you big human," Princess Mansherry called. She perched herself onto Rain's left shoulder. "You may take me back to Green Bit now."

"There's something that we need to do first," Rain said. She climbed back onto Darkess' saddle. Luffy was right behind her with Leo on his shoulder. "Luffy has some business in the palace still. Once he's done with that I promise Darkess and I will personally escort you home."

"Very well," Mansherry conceded. "As long as it doesn't take too long."

~ Kagome and Shadow soared above the city of Dressrosa. Sabo rode with them, pointing out specific things that needed attention. Most of it was certain devil fruit users. One man that they canceled the power of was able to swim through anything. His style of dress made Kagome laugh and gag at the same time. He was fighting a man that looked like he was a robot. Sabo explained that he was Luffy's shipwright, Franky, and that he was also a cyborg. Another man could fuse with and command rock. He was facing off a swordsman with green hair. Kagome learned that he was another of Luffy's crew, Zoro.

The two of them went through the city cancelling the powers of devil fruit users and those that were effected by them. The biggest problem was those people that were being controlled by invisible strings and attacking their family and friends. "How many people have been subjected to these devil fruit users?" Kagome asked.

"Dressrosa has been under the rule of Don Quixote Doflamingo for ten years," Sabo explained. "This whole time he's been weaving his power through the land and able to activate his string powers from anywhere in the nation. He has a member in his family that can turn humans into living toys. He's used her to change those that have spoken out against him. He's been ruling this country through nothing except lies."

"How disgusting," Kagome chided. "Citizens shouldn't be treated like that. If he was actually a good leader then he would have no need to use such vile methods. I can't stand people like that. Manipulative and tricky, willing to sacrifice others in order to gain their own desires."

"You are most definately Dragon's wife," Sabo grinned. "You just

described the feelings of everyone that's joined the Revolutionary Army. No one person is better than any other."

~ Rain stood between Luffy and an ugly man that looked like a pile of goop. As Luffy was busy facing off against Doflamingo she was busy keeping his cronies from getting in the middle of it. The amulet was doing it's job and keeping their powers from effecting her and the area around her. This included Darkess, who she refused to get off of. First off, to keep her dragon from suffering under the powers of one of the devil fruits. Second, if they needed to move fast to stop another from getting to Luffy it was best to rely on her speed.

Leo helped as much as he could. He couldn't attack the devil fruit users directly. He was able to trip them or blind them with the drapery. He was following a suggestion of Rain's. Confusing the enemy and keeping their attention focused on chasing them was better then letting them attack Luffy from different angles. The two understood to let Luffy fight his battle. That didn't mean that they couldn't fight anyone else that was in the area.

~ Kagome and Sabo finished going through the city. The citizens were finally rising up against the people that had lied to them for so long. Now the two of them were making their way to the palace. Kagome was anxious to see how her son was doing.

When they were finally above the hill the scene was shocking. The entire palace had been smashed. There was rubble strewn everywhere. Kagome looked to see a man in a pink feather jacket standing in front of Luffy. Luffy couldn't move, his face looked like he was struggling against something. Kagome looked around and finally found Rain. She was laying on the ground, Darkess standing over her and two dwarves that were trying to wake her. A man that was oozing was steadily advancing towards them.

Her anger growing at her family being threatened, Kagome notched an arrow and pulled back the string. She shot the cloak of the man heading for Darkess. "You take care of Darkess and the others," she told Sabo. "I'll stop that guy from hurting Luffy."

Sabo jumped to the ground once he was close enough for his comfort. He still wasn't used to possessing the powers of the Flare-Flare Fruit.

Shadow swung back around and Kagome took careful aim at the one she dubbed 'Pink Feathers'. "Hit the mark," she whispered. The arrow burst forth with a pink flare as it cut through the sky. It landed with a thud in Pink Feathers shoulder. He stumbled and glared up at Kagome. She and Shadow landed just behind Luffy, who was moving on his own once again.

"Don't think that I'll let you hurt my son before I get a chance to ground him for being reckless," Kagome seethed.

Luffy looked back towards her in horror. "Wha!?" In the background they could hear Sabo burst out laughing. He had obviously heard Kagome. Darkess was even giving her version of a laugh.

Doflamingo extended his hand towards Kagome. His two middle fingers twitched, then twitched again. He looked down at his hand in confusion.

"I suppose you didn't realize this about me," Kagome started. "I'm a priestess and I have a natural ability to cancel out the powers of a devil fruit user." She then turned her attention to Luffy. "Go ahead and finish this Luffy. We have a lot to talk about."

"Got it," Luffy said with a grin. Kagome's threat to ground him completely forgotten. Luffy's fists turned black as he imbued them with Armor Haki. "Gum-Gum no Gatling!" His two arms moved so fast it looked like he had twenty instead of two.

Doflamingo attempted to dodge, but without the use of his power his speed was cut almost in half. A fair number of the punches managed to reach him.

Luffy pulled back his arms to see the result of his last attack. Doflamingo was staggering as he tried to stand straight. He was glaring at both Luffy and Kagome. He started to move in their direction, a murderous look on his face.

"Room." The area was filled with a strange power. Doflamingo looked behind him. Law was there with his sword out. "Scalpel." Before he could react, Doflamingo's heart was cut out of his chest. It rushed to Law's empty hand. To emphasize the position he was now in, Law squeezed the heart. Doflamingo collapsed to the ground, clutching at his chest.

"Now that's just creepy," Rain said. Sabo was helping her to stand up. Leo and Princess Mansherry were fussy over her, trying to make sure that she didn't have any serious injuries. When Sabo stepped away, Darkness moved in and started pushing against Rain. "I'm fine girl," Rain soothed.

"What do you plan to do now Tra-guy?" Luffy asked. "If we just leave him like this you know that he'll only come after this kingdom."

"We're not going to just leave it," Law said. "I'm going to keep this heart as insurance. Your crew member destroyed the SMILE factory. We have Caesar Clown in our possession." Law then fully faced Doflamingo. "Neither you, nor any members of your family will come after us. You should know what will happen if I sense even a hint of you." Law squeezed the heart once again. "You'll leave this country and never return. A former Celestial Dragon has no business holding any sort of power."

"He's a what?" Luffy asked.

"I thought he seemed overly arrogant," Sabo commented.

Rain side stepped over to Kagome. "Isn't that the name of those 'arrogant pricks' you told us about?" Sabo once again started to laugh.

Doflamingo sneered at everyone and started to walk away. Trebel, the oozing guy, and Sugar followed him as they made their way down the hill. Luffy walked up to stand next to Law. "Will he do what you say?" Luffy asked.

"We'll see," Law answered cryptically. "He didn't give up his

position as a Pirate Warlord like I demanded him to."

Kagome made her way over to Luffy. She grabbed his head on either side and started moving it from side to side as she assessed his damages. She was giving him a critical eye. "Don't you scare me like that again," she demanded. She then pulled Luffy into a hug. She squeezed him for all she was worth.

"Mom...Air..." Kagome loosened her grip a little as she pulled away to look Luffy over again. His eyes were swirling and he looked a little dazed, like he was about to pass out.

Tears were brimming in Kagome's eyes. "Oi, oi..." Luffy snapped himself out of it and started to panic, not knowing how to handle a crying woman. "I didn't mean to upset you."

"You didn't do anything," Kagome spoke. Her voice was cracking from emotion.

Rain smacked Sabo on the arm and gestured for him to come with her. She made a shooing gesture towards Law, silently telling him to give the two some personal time together. Rain got on Darkess with both Leo and Mansherry on her shoulders. Sabo climbed on behind her and they were off, into the air. Leo directed them in the direction of Green Bit and Tontatta Kingdom.

"I never thought I would see you again," Kagome finally cried out. "I missed out on your whole childhood." She pulled Luffy to her once again. This time she didn't squeeze the life out of him. Luffy hugged her back this time. He was starting to get emotional as Kagome couldn't hold it in any longer.

"Why did you leave?" Luffy asked.

"I didn't want to," Kagome cried. "I was taken from you by another priestess. I was needed to help another live."

"Why did it have to be you?"

"I can't answer that," Kagome cried. "I can only say that I'm here now and I promise to never disappear like that ever again." The two fell into silence as they stood there.

~ Rain and Sabo returned to the third tier of the hill the ruins of the palace stood on. Leo and Mansherry were safely delivered back to Green Bit. "So now I have a question," Sabo started. "When we got there you were on the ground. I had thought you were a capable warrior, what happened?"

Rain let out an exhausted sigh. "The fight was going well," she said. "I was keeping those other fruit users from interfering with Luffy's fight. I never saw Leo miss his target. He 'flew' over snotman and knocked me in the head. For so little a guy he has a really thick melon."

"You'd be surprised how often something that strange happens to us," Robin greeted. "I have come to the conclusion that strange things or strange people are drawn to our captain. As a result, things like that are a common occurrence for us."

"Well this should be interesting," Rain sat in front of the fire they built. As soon as she was settled Robin started bombarding her with questions. She wanted to know all about the dragons, the village of Berk and their culture.

~ "Then my grandfather found Toothless in the rumble," Rain was explaining. "He didn't see my father. He started to apologize, claiming it was his fault. Toothless could sense his sincerity and opened his wings to reveal he had managed to save most of my father."

"What do you mean by most of?" Franky asked.

"My father lost his left foot in the explosion," Rain described. "After that dragons became not only a common sight in Berk, they became a way of life. My father became the dragon trainer and invented ways of making it more convenient for dragons and humans to live together."

"How fascinating," Robin mused.

The sound of footsteps drew near. Luffy walked into the light, sulking, while Kagome followed as she wiped her eyes dry. "What's wrong with you?" Usopp asked. "I thought you would be happy to have your mom with you again."

"I'm grounded," Luffy announced. Silence reigned for a few seconds. It was suddenly broken when Usopp and Franky burst out laughing. "Shut up!"

7. The Next Step

Disclaimer: I do not own Inyasha, One Piece or How to Train Your Dragon. All characters and their affiliations are owned by their respective creators. I am not making money off of this work of fiction. The characters Rock and Rain do belong to me.

I would like some suggestions. I've been thinking about relationships and would like some opinions on that. Dragon and Kagome are together, that's not changing. I would like input on some others. Please vote on it.

Rain/Luffy

Rain/Law

Rain/Sabo

Rain/Zoro

Koala/Sabo

Koala/Luffy

Nami/Sanji

Nami/Zoro

Nami/Luffy

Robin/Law

Any input would be appreciated.

****A Family of Outlaws****

Chapter Six: The Next Step

Citizens from all over the city stopped by the camp that was set up. They brought gifts of food for the saviors of their city. They also expressed their most heart felt apologies to King Riku, Violet, Kuros and Rebecca for not believing in the family ten years ago and how they had treated them since.

Luffy went to town on the meat. Kagome was shocked at the amount of food that he was eating. No one on her side of the family put away that much food. Even the dragons were stunned.

When almost all of the food had been consumed, Franky and Zoro made an appearance. "Where have you guys been?" Luffy asked.

"I was looking for him." Franky spoke as he pointed to Zoro. "He was lost once again."

"Shut up," Zoro growled out. The swordsman then looked around the area. He saw a few faces he didn't recognize and zeroed in on them. "Who are the two of you?" he demanded. He was looking directly at Rain and Kagome.

"Zoro, that's Rain," Luffy started. "She helped me in the last fight. She also rides that cool looking black dragon."

"What dragon?" Zoro looked where Luffy was pointing and saw movement in the shadows. A large, reptilian head came into the light and stared at him. The two held the look for a moment when the dragon sank back into the shadows.

"That one," Luffy laughed. "Her name is Darkess and she's really fast." Luffy then looked to Kagome, who was sitting next to him. "This is my mom."

Both Franky and Zoro stood still. They had heard that Luffy's father was the famous revolutionary leader Dragon, but they were told absolutely nothing about who his mother was. "It's really cool guys," Luffy puffed out his chest proudly. "My mom can cancel out devil fruit powers."

There was a dead silence around camp. Rain set down her plate she had been picking off of. Having been through something similar before, she knew the drill. She then placed her hands over her ears.

"WHAT!?"

~ The next morning, Rain had woken before sunrise to take the last watch. Darkess was curled around her as they sat just outside of camp. Using what meager light she could, Rain pulled out a piece of paper and a writing utensil. She then began to write out a report.

She went over the battle they were in briefly and then described that Kagome found her son. They would be leaving soon to locate Dragon.

"What is that?" Rain looked up to see Robin looking down her shoulder.

"I'm making a report and then sending it to either my brother or father."

"I've never seen such writings before. Is it some sort of code?"

"No," Rain shook her head. "This is the actual language of my people. Do you recognize any of the symbols?"

"I do not," Robin admitted. "I'm an expert on ancient writings and it doesn't look familiar. I would imagine that if anyone should get the note before your father they would have a hard time reading it."

"Exactly so," Rain said with a grin.

"You said your father lived in the East Blue. You won't be able to reach him with just a letter."

"I have a way to reach him." Rain stood up and went to the gear they tucked away. "My father is considered the expert on dragons. As such, he's come up with a remarkable way to send letters to those that didn't have dragons or to those that were out on missions. He called it 'Air-mail'."

Rain went and collected one of the fish that Darkess had left alone. She brought it with her as she opened one of her saddle bags. Robin watched intently as Rain lifted out a small blue and green dragon. "This is Swift," Rain explained. "He's what we call a Terrible Terror." Rain put her letter in a small tube and attached it to one of Swift's legs as he ate. "He'll be delivering the report for me. Once he's finished he always comes back."

"I'm surprised that he does come back," Robin stated. "You would think that he would run away at the first opportunity."

"Dragons are very territorial," Rain said. "They will always return to the place they consider to be theirs no matter the distance. Swift considers Darkess and I to be his."

"That is quite impressive," Robin smiled. "I would love to visit your home someday. I've heard you describe a few different dragons. How many are there?"

"There is a lot," Rain admitted. "Kagome's brother rides a Monstrous Nightmire. His wife rides a Hideous Zippleback with her twin brother. It's a dragon that has two heads instead of one. That still doesn't cover all of the dragons we live with."

"It all sounds fascinating."

Once Swift was ready Rain gave him the command to deliver the letter. The small dragon needed no further prodding and took off. "He'll come

back in two days or so," Rain informed.

"Do we need to wait for him?" Robin asked.

"Not at all," Rain smiled. "Dragons have a sort of internal compass. It drives them to return to it's home and territory."

"What did you say in your letter?" Robin asked.

"I just told our chief that we found Luffy and the general direction that we would be heading next. It keeps him and my father from worrying."

"How well do you know the chief?"

"He's my older brother."

~ Once everyone was awake breakfast started being prepared. Used to cooking on a campfire and eating on the fly, Kagome prepared the meal. Luffy was wolfing every thing down as usual.

"Your mom is a great cook Luffy," Usopp said. "I bet she could give Sanji a run for his money."

"Who is that?" Rain asked.

"Curly brow is the cook," Zoro answered.

"Why do you call him that?" Kagome asked.

"You'll see," Zoro answered cryptically.

Once Luffy was finally finished eating they started to back up camp. Cavendish approached Luffy at this point. "It's time to settle the score," he announced. "I will defeat you and become famous."

Luffy grinned and started to follow Cavendish. "Hold it right there mister," Kagome stomped over. "First off, is fame the only reason that you want to face my son?"

"What other reason is there?"

Striking as fast as a snake, Kagome grabbed a hold of Cavendish's ear. "You listen to me," she hissed. "I might have allowed you to hold a grudge against my son if he had actually done something. Since his only offense to you is people are paying attention to him then I won't let either of you fight. Not to mention that he's grounded at the moment."

"I'm a pirate captain," Luffy pointed out. "You can't ground me now."

The heads of Rain, Darkess and Shadow snapped up to look in their direction. Rain leapt onto Darkess' back and the two took off before she was fully buckled in the safety harness. Shadow was quick to follow after. The three of them headed towards the dock.

Robin noted the behavior and started packing her few things. Once she was finished she also started headed for the dock. "What's the matter Robin?" Usopp asked.

"I have a feeling that we should be heading out is all," Robin smiled. It was the same smile that said she knew something was up and it was in everyone else's best interest to follow her. Zoro pulled a fuming Cavendish while Franky carried a star gazed Bortolomeo. Everyone else followed on their own.

"You listen here mister," Kagome started. She was poking Luffy in the chest while adding a little of her reiki to it. "I don't care how old you get or what position you hold, you'll never be too old to be bent over my knee, you got that?"

"Yes," Luffy groaned. He was rubbing the spot where he had been poked. It felt like it was burning. His mom might be small of stature, but she was down right scary when she wanted to be.

~ Rain landed on the dock with Darkess. There were only a few people milling about. A man noticed them and started to slowly approach. "Are you with the Straw Hat crew?" he asked.

Rain glanced around and noticed how tense everyone seemed to be. "I'm a friend of theirs," she said in a slow manner. Once the words left her mouth everyone visibly relaxed.

"I'm the dock foreman," the man said. His tone changed from hesitant to open and friendly. "We've been waiting for someone that's with the Straw Hats."

"I plan on traveling with them for a little ways," Rain confirmed.

"We have a ship prepared for you," the foreman said. "I could show it to you."

"Lead the way," Rain grinned. She and Darkess followed the man to a large ship. It didn't look new, but it didn't look like it would fall apart.

"This ship was once the proud vessel of the Dressrosa Armada," the foreman said. "She still has some life in her, but I wouldn't recommend taking it into any serious battles."

"We'll keep that in mind," Rain said. "Thank you for your kindness."

"It's the least we could do for the ones that exposed the Don Quixote family." The foreman walked away without another word. He and all the other dock hands were still so ashamed they hadn't trusted King Riku when he needed them the most.

Rain glanced back to the ship and then back to Darkess. "Shall we explore for traps?" she asked. Darkess let out a disapproving noise. "Food then?" Darkess bounced in glee and bolted for the ship. Rain shook her head and followed at a more sedate pace.

By the time Robin and the others arrived Darkess had already raided the kitchen. Since the ship likely hadn't been used in a while there was nothing stored. Usopp and Kin'emon decided they would go to purchase supplies. Law told them they needed enough for at least a week. Zoro, Kanjuro, Sabo, Bortolomeo and Cavendish were then dragged

along to help carry stuff back. Franky boarded the ship and began to check to see if it was sea worthy.

Robin looked around the top of the deck. She found Rain at the head of the ship. She was watching clouds pass over head. Darkess moved to stand closer to Rain and made a noise to draw her attention. Rain glanced back to her partner, then back to the clouds. Robin decided to watch her to see if that was normal behavior on both of their parts.

~ When Kagome had finished giving her son the lecture of respecting his elders they went to catch up to everyone else. Shadow joined them before they reached the bottom of the hill. It was a short distance to the docks once they were on dragon back. Usopp and the others still weren't back from gathering supplies.

As Kagome and Luffy were boarding the ship Rain and Darkess met them at the top. "It's a bit of an older ship," she said. "The big guy, Franky, he's looking it over now."

"If he's checking out the ship then there's nothing to worry about," Luffy proudly stated. "He's the best shipwright in the world and he's part of my crew. Only the best will do."

Rain smiled at Luffy's enthusiasm. She pointed to a cabin door. "Robin has set up room arrangements," she informed. "That is the women's cabin." Her hand moved to a hatch in the deck. "The men's cabin is below. She's in there now getting rid of some pests and dust. I imagine that it's quite dirty down there. She took Darkess with her to help chase the more annoying critters."

"What annoying critters?" Luffy asked.

"Rats, Straw Hatter, she's talking about the infestation of rats on this ship." Law walked up to them, he had just finished his own exploration of the ship. "I don't recommend storing the food in any of the cabinets or even below deck."

"We could keep them in the women's cabin," Kagome suggested. "I'm sure that Rain will want Darkess with us there. Her scent alone should make sure that the rats won't approach our food casually."

"Where is the food?" Luffy demanded.

"You just ate," Law pointed out.

"I didn't get enough to eat."

"We're back," Usopp called out. The four looked over the railing to see the seven men on the dock. Each one had a cart piled high with food.

"All of this is supposed to feed us for just one week?" Cavendish asked.

"Who said you're coming along?" Usopp's face got angry.

"I won't give up until I've had my revenge against Straw Hat," Cavendish stated.

"That's pretty petty," Rain said. "Not to mention, we barely avoided a volcanic eruption the last time you got so bold. I think you should put it a rest. Go join your own crew. I'm sure you two will meet again and have plenty of time to knock each others heads off. Until then, let's avoid making Kagome angry again." Robin and Darkess were just coming up from below.

Cavendish glowered in Rain's direction. "What makes you think you have the right to tell me what to do?"

"How about a nice, sharp set of teeth." Darkess joined Rain in looking over the rail.

Her appearance caused a shudder to go down Cavendish's spine. He wasn't sure if Darkess and Shadow truly were dragons, but they were ferocious enough for him to not question it too much. "I'll go back to my ship for now," he finally conceded. "This isn't over, Straw Hat. When you're not hiding behind your mom or another woman and her pet I'll get my revenge." Cavendish swished his cape at them and sauntered away.

"I still don't think that's a man," Rain mentioned casually. Her comment caused a round a laughter to pass among the group.

"What's so funny?" Franky came up.

"It's nothing important," Kagome waved off. "So, Mister Franky, how's the ship?"

"What's with the 'Mister'? My name is Franky, just call me that." Franky then did a pose, his giant arms up above his head. "The ship is SUPER ready to go. There are a few problems, but it's nothing I can't work on while we sail. Besides, we don't plan on keeping the ship, right Luffy?"

>"Our ship is the Sunny," Luffy announced.<p>

"Well said Captain," Robin complemented.

"We should set sail before the Marines start to show up," Law suggested. "That Admiral that was here would most likely call for back up. We don't want to be around when that time comes around."

"Then what are we waiting for?" Kagome asked. "Let's get to work people. Get that food on board and stored in the women's cabin. Make sure that it's tied down so that it doesn't shift with the waves."

The group on port started to board the ship. "That woman is bossy," Usopp muttered. "I'm glad that she's not my mother."

Shadow picked up the cart Cavendish left behind and flew with it to the deck of the ship. The crew got busy unloading the carts and storing the food in a corner of the women's cabin. Soon enough there was barely enough room to sleep in. "There's barely enough room for us," Rain pointed out to Robin. "Let alone enough room for Darkess to come sleep in."

"I wouldn't worry about that," Robin said. "At the end of the day I'm

sure Luffy would have eaten enough for Darkess to be able to sleep in the same room as us."

"I know he ate a lot last night and this morning, bu would he really would eat that much?"

"More if we let him."

"It's really okay for me to come along with you guys?" Bortolomeo asked. He had tears running down his cheeks.

"Why wouldn't it be?" Luffy asked.

"It's a dream come true to join you," Bortolomeo was sobbing. "I can't believe that this is actually happening to me."

"Is he going to be okay?" Usopp asked.

"Who knows?" Zoro shrugged.

"Let's set sail," Luffy cheered. Everyone on the ship got busy with one thing or another. Rain and Darkess went up to the crow's nest to keep watch. Darkess was inside the nest, curled tightly around the top of the mast. Rain stood on the rail, one hand on the mast to keep her balance.

"Hey, wait for us!" A female's voice drew everyone's attention. A woman wearing a black hat with goggles, a white jacket with frills and a frilly black skirt was running to the ship while waving. Running next to her was a man with long hair and a beard wearing a karate gi. His face was void of emotion.

"Koala, Hack," Sabo waved back. "I was wondering when you two would show up."

"Were you planning on leaving us here?" Koala asked in a teasing voice. "That wouldn't be very nice. After all that intelligence I gathered while you were out knocking heads around."

"I knew the two of you would make it," Sabo said. "I didn't choose you for my team because I had to keep an eye on you."

"So true," Koala agreed. "So, we were about to set sail?" Koala and Hack boarded the ship and began to help with preparations.

Franky took to the helm of the ship as Bortolomeo and Usopp unfurled the sails. Zoro and Law brought up the anchor. Kagome went into the women's cabin and started to gather up ingredients for the mid-day meal. If her son ate as much as everyone indicated then cooking would be a full time job. She blamed his metabolism on his father, no one in her family ate so much.

Kin'emon and Kanjuro tried to be helpful, but they weren't sailors. They ended up being more of a hindrance then a help. Usopp told them as much and suggested that they stay out of the way. Robin busied herself by checking the cannons. If they got into a battle on sea then they would need to be in top fighting form.

~ With Dressrosa out of sight, Law decided that now was the time to approach Luffy. "Straw Hatter," he called out. Luffy looked back at

him from his place on the ships figurehead. "You and I need to talk."

Luffy jumped down from the figurehead and walked over to Law. Once he was in front of him, Law continued to speak. "Why didn't you listen to me when I said that our alliance was over?"

"Why should I have?" Luffy returned. "You only wanted to break our friendship because things weren't going our way for a while. Just because things look bad is no reason to break a friendship."

"It's not a friendship," Law argued. "It's an alliance towards defeating Kainu and then the remaining pirate emperors. Once we've completed our goals then there will be no reason for the alliance. We'll go our separate ways again."

"How long do you think it will take to beat all four of the emperors?" Luffy asked. Law was stunned into silence. "If they're all anything like Shanks then I bet it will take a long time. So both of our crews will be together for awhile. It's better to be friends and help eachother then to be just around and in the way. Besides, that's what an alliance is. Friends working together, helping eachother and fighting alongside together to beat a common enemy."

"I don't get you sometimes Straw Hatter," Law said with a sigh. "An alliance isn't a friendship. It's just two groups of people working towards a common goal."

"That's what friends do," Luffy interrupted.

"There are strings attached to friendships," Law continued. "If things look bad for one party then the other can escape without too much side effect. A friendship obligates the other party to get involved and in trouble. Which is exactly what you did back at Dressrosa."

"Just because you say we're not friends doesn't make it so," Luffy yelled. "I say we're friends, so that means that we're friends."

Law looked flabbergasted after Luffy's announcement. He didn't know how to respond. "That's our captain for you," Robin walked in. "Once he's made up his mind there's no arguing with him."

~ Rain watched the whole conversation from her place on the crow's nest. She and Darkess had been so quiet she supposed that everyone had forgotten they were up there in the first place. Rain glanced back out to the sea, there were no other ships in sight. She turned back to look at a lightly dozing Darkess. "I don't suppose you would want to go for a flight?" Rain whispered. Darkess' head snapped up and she looked at Rain. Her shoulders started rotating, warming up and edgy with anticipation. "I suppose we could also get you some fresh fish for lunch while we're out." Rain moved off to the side to let Darkess have some room.

Darkess leapt out of the crow's nest and started flying circles around the ship. The action drew the attention of those on the deck. Shadow picked her head up from her nap towards the aft of the ship. "Darkess and I are going for a flight," Rain called down. "She gets a little antsy if she stays in one place too long." She directed her attention to Shadow. "We're also going to do some fishing."

Shadow stood with a stretch. Her wings expanded and she too was in the air. "If Kagome asks where Shadow is let her know I took her to find some fish." Rain waved towards everyone. She then watched for Darkess' location. Her partner was circling back around to the ship. Once she was close enough Rain jumped off of the nest. Luffy and Law took a step forward, thinking she would fall to the deck. Darkess caught her and they were off into the sky, Shadow following.

"I suppose they're not used to traveling with a ship," Robin mused. "I can't blame them either. It looks fun to fly like that."

"It's awesome," Luffy agreed. "I want to go flying some more."

"Perhaps you should ask the next time Rain or your mother decide to go for a stretch." Robin then walked away from the two captains.

~ An hour passes by and Rain hasn't returned. Shadow came back on her own and contently curled up towards the aft of the ship once again. Kagome finally emerges from the kitchen. "It's lunch time," she announced. Luffy rushes past her with an excited cheer. Kagome looks around and notices the missing duo. "Where is Rain and Darkess?"

"They left for a flight," Robin said. "They had taken Shadow with them so that they could go fishing, but Shadow returned half an hour ago without any catch. We haven't seen Darkess' form in the sky either."

"I wouldn't worry too much about them," Kagome said. "They often disappear for hours at a time." She then smiled to the crew paying attention. "A dragons main source of food is fish. So when Rain said she would take the dragons fishing she was saying that she was taking them to get something to eat. Shadow returned because she was full and had no desire to stay away longer then was neccessary."

"That's good to hear," Usopp said. "I was worried that they would start eating us if they were getting hungry."

"I suppose it's to be expected," Kagome agreed. "A lot of the stories and legends make dragons out to be these fierce man eaters. I can hardly blame you for being afraid."

"When do you think they'll be back?" Law asked. "We don't want to have attention drawn to her, then back to us."

"You don't need to worry," Kagome dismissed. "Darkess can out pace the fastest ship that the Marines or other pirates have. Even if those two were to be spotted by some coincidence."

"How can you be so sure?" Zoro asked.

"When Darkess was just a little adolescent dragon," Kagome began. "The two of them had gotten into some of the food storage areas. Darkess ate a good portion of the food that was stored there. I tried to discipline them, but they were too fast for me. Even young, Darkess was able to outfly my fully grown Shadow. I had to call Rain's father, Hiccup, from his duties as chief so he could go and catch her. He and his dragon, another Night Fury named Toothless, had

them chased down. Hiccup had Rain sitting in front of him in his saddle when they finally came back. Toothless, as the alpha of the dragons, was able to command Darkess to return to Berk."

"I've been wondering at something," Robin said. "Rain mentioned she had an older brother named Rock. You said that her father's name is Hiccup. Why do they have such odd names?"

"Berk is a village of Vikings," Kagome said. "You can think of them as a group of warrior sailors, even more so than Marines. They're a bit unimaginative though. Valka, Hiccup's own mother, told me that he was named that because that's what Vikings called the small and weak. She had been afraid he wouldn't survive when he was born since he was small and frail. Then when Rock was born, his mother had said it was like carrying a rock in her stomach. Rain was born on a rainy day."

"Rain and Rock's mother, this is the first I've heard mention of her." Robin pointed out as she sat down as well.

"We don't talk much about her," Kagome said. "I suppose I should tell all of you now. It's better to talk about it when Rain isn't here. Her name was Astrid and she was the fiercest warrior Berk had. When Rain was a few days old the village came under attack. They were targeting Hiccup and Astrid's house. Valka encouraged Astrid to flee with Rain, being in no condition to fight off invaders. It was a trap though. Once Astrid and her dragon, Storm Fly, were far enough away from the village they were ambushed. They managed to get away, but were fatally wounded. They took many blows to keep them from hurting Rain. The two managed to find an island with a cave to hide in. My own mother found them the next day, or so we assume. Astrid and Storm Fly had already passed away by then. Astrid was curled around Rain in an extra effort to protect her. It was her last act, giving her life so Rain could live. We told that story to Rain once and she blamed herself. She felt that she was the reason that her father and mother were no longer together. It took all of us a long time to convince her that no one thought like that, not even her older brother. So now you all know the story. Please don't mention any of what I just told you to Rain." A chorus of agreement was heard from around the room.

` Kagome was just finishing cleaning up when Rain and Darkess returned. Kagome went to the doorway just as Rain was pulling off her helmet. She had her arms crossed over her chest and was tapping her foot. Rain froze when she finally noticed her. "You could have at least been back for lunch," Kagome chastised. "You know how important a healthy meal is."

"I'm sorry," Rain softly spoke. "But Darkess and I needed a good stretch."

"Stretch or goofing off? I know very well the two of you like to play in the clouds."

"A little of both?" Rain grinned sheepishly.

"Next time you two decide to go off on your own come talk to me in person," Kagome ordered. "That way I know exactly where you are and I can tell you when you need to be back."

"That's exactly why I didn't tell you," Rain muttered.

"What was that?"

"No problem, I'll do that from now on."

"That's what I thought you said."

"That's not what I heard," Usopp said. "I heard her say that she didn't tell you..."

Rain leapt without any warning. She tackled Usopp and had him in a headlock before he knew what was going on.

"What did he say?" Kagome asked.

"It was nothing," Rain said. "He was just wanting to learn some Viking fighting techniques. I thought we could get started once Darkess and I came back." Kagome nodded and headed back into the kitchen. "What's wrong with you?" Rain seethed. "Didn't you see what she did when she got mad at Luffy?"

"No we didn't," Zoro said. "Robin had the rest of us left shortly after you ran."

"I had a good reason to," Rain defended.

"I wish you warned me," Luffy said. "I would have ran with you." He then came up and stuck his face close to Usopp's. "Can you teach me some Viking fighting techniques too? Hey Usopp, can you even breathe?"

Rain looked down to see that Usopp's face had gone blue and he passed out. "Oops," Rain let him go. "Sorry about that Usopp. I guess I don't know my own strength when confronted with Kagome."

"You're that frightened of her?" Law asked.

"Hey now," Luffy cut in. "My mom is down right scary when she's mad." Rain was nodding her head vigorously in agreement.

"All fun and games aside," Sabo put in. "We need to discuss what we're doing next. We should go to the Revolutionary Army Headquarters. I promised Leader that I would escort his wife there if I ever bumped into her on my travels."

"We need to go to Zou," Law countered. "We don't have any time for a side trip. You want to go then I'm not stopping you. We have a goal to defeat the pirate emperors and your side trip will just be in the way of that."

"I promised to bring Kagome to Leader," Sabo came back. "I won't break my promise to him. He's like a father to me, to many of us revolutionaries. He's saved a good number of us."

"I'm not arguing over his character." Law was now getting agitated. "I'm telling you that we don't have any time for side trips."

"You can't just decide that," Sabo snapped. "First off, you're not the only captain here. Luffy is the captain of the Straw Hats. He has

just as much say as you do. Besides, this is his father we're talking about. I'm sure the two would want to meet. Then there's Kagome, do you honestly think she'll let you keep her from reuniting with her husband?"

Rain, Robin and Koala decided not to point out that they could just fly there. The three women stood off to the side, each wondering how far the men would go in their argument. Darkess laid down in front of them. The kitchen door opening again caught everyone's attention. Kagome strode out with a wooden spoon in hand. "Just what is going on now?" Kagome demanded.

"Sabo wants us to meet Dad and Law says that we can't," Luffy explained.

"And exactly why can't we?" Kagome turned her fury towards Law. When he looked into her eyes he visibly swallowed. "There better be a good reason that you're keeping us from that."

"We have to go to Zou," Law explained. "My crew and the rest of the Straw Hats are waiting for us there. The Straw Hats have two Devil Fruit users in their custody and it's dangerous for them right now."

"Why didn't you say so?" Kagome asked sweetly. "So here's what we'll all do. First we'll go to Zou like Law suggested. We wouldn't want to leave friends in such a dangerous position. Once we've done that then we'll go where Sabo wants. Everyone gets what they want."

"But that's not..." Law began.

"Everyone gets what they want," Kagome repeated. Her eyes narrowed and focused on Law's. Law could only nod his head.

"You were right Luffy," Zoro whispered. He was leaning in towards his captain. "You mom is scary when she's mad." Luffy nodded his head.

Rain patted Darkess on her head. "There is no way it's going to be that easy," she said. Darkess huffed her agreement.

8. The Island of Zou

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****A Family of Outlaws****

Chapter Seven: The Island of Zou

It had been two days since everyone set sail on the borrowed ship from Dressrosa. This day Kagome had an idea that she wanted to try on Luffy. The two of them were sitting on the deck in a meditative state. Well, Kagome was meditating while Luffy was fidgeting. "Hold still Luffy," Kagome sighed.

"But I want to go fishing with Usopp," Luffy complained. He could

hear Usopp snickering from off to the side as he held a fishing pole.

"You can't go fishing," Kagome said. "You're still grounded for the next two days."

"Oh man," Luffy slumped in his position.

"Sit up straight now. I'm almost done."

Rain laughed from her place on the railing of the crow's nest. It was always fun to watch someone else be on the receiving end of Kagome's mother hen mode. Darkess was on the deck with Shadow, enjoying the rays of the sun as they napped. "Is she always like that?" Zoro asked. He was standing in the crow's nest, looking over the rail at the two below.

"She can be worse," Rain confirmed. "She's a bit on the over protective side. I remember when Darkess and I first bonded. She set a list of rules so long that my father had to veto them. He then put my grandmother in charge of watching over me as Darkess and I learned how to fly together. Kagome and Shadow are good friends, but they never fly in a combat situation. Kagome prefers to be on the ground, firing arrows at people."

"You fight from the air?" Zoro asked.

"There's nothing like it," Rain smiled.

"I would imagine not. I'm a swordsman, I fight better with both feet on the ground."

"I'll have to introduce you to air combat sometime," Rain said. "Darkess seems to get an extra burst of speed from the adrenaline that fighting enduces. We haven't found any dragons faster then the Night Fury. As her rider I have to be alert on her back. It'll be dangerous if she takes a corner too sharp and I can't make the clearance."

"Sounds interesting." Zoro watched as Rain pulled out a set of binoculars from her pack. She put them to her eyes as she leaned forward a bit. "What do you see?" he asked.

"I see an island off to starboard," Rain answered. She put the binoculars away. Rain looked down to the deck and people below. "I see an island," she called. "I'm going to scout it out and see if your crew is there." At the sound of her voice, Darkess perks up.

Rain jumps off of the crow's nest. Darkess is quick to leap up and allow Rain to fall onto the saddle halfway down. The two start to head in the direction Rain spotted the island.

Luffy leapt to his feet. "Wait for me," he called. "I'm coming with you. Gum Gum Rocket!" Both of Luffy's hands stretched outward. They grabbed a hold of the back of Rain's saddle. Once he had a good grip Luffy pulled himself into the air. He landed securely behind Rain, only causing Darkess to falter in her flight a little.

"A little warning would be nice next time," Rain chastised.

"I did warn you," Luffy said. "I told you that I was coming too."

"I wasn't finished Luffy!" Kagome yells. The two on the dragon pretended not to hear as they got further away from the ship.

"What free spirits," Robin commented.

"It's my curse," Kagome sighed. "To be around and raise such willful children. Even Shippo was hard headed when he wanted to be."

"Who is Shippo?" Law asked.

"He was a small child I took in when both his parents were killed," Kagome said. "It was before I met Luffy's father. We traveled together for a time and eventually had to part ways. I had to go home and he had his own life to live."

Sensing a change of subject was needed Robin decided to ask something else. "Rain certainly has no fear of heights," she said. "More than once I've seen her standing on the crow's nest like that. Also, it's not the first time she's jumped off to land on Darkess. It's a little startling at first."

"That's Rain for you," Kagome said. "Her whole family is like that. They love to fly in the air on their dragons. Valka has told me it feels like freedom to all of them. They have no fear of falling because they trust their dragons so much. In fact, Valka will travel from one dragon to another in mid-air. She trusts all of them so much."

"Do you trust them like that?"

"I trust Shadow," Kagome said. "But I'm not much of a flyer. I'm more of a 'both feet firmly planted' kind of girl. Of course, I wasn't introduced to dragons and flying until after Luffy had been born. It wasn't something that I was raised with." Robin nodded her head in understanding.

~ Rain and Luffy were flying over the island. "I see a village not too far from here," Rain said. "I can't really see their sea port though."

"The Sunny wouldn't be at a Sea Port," Luffy said. "It's a pirate ship and needs to dock somewhere out of sight."

"Then we should look for a ship in a hiding place along the shoreline," Rain added. Darkess leaned to the right, changing their course to fly closer to the shore of the island. "What does your ship look like again?"

"It has a lion head as a figurehead," Luffy said. "My Jolly Rodger has a Straw Hat."

"Fitting."

"Of course it is."

The three flew for a few more minutes. "I think that I see it," Rain said. "It's next to a yellow submarine."

"That would be Tra-guy's pirate crew," Luffy said with a grin.

"Then we've found them," Rain nodded. She noticed several people running around below them. "We should head back and tell the others."

"Where's the fun in that?" Luffy leapt out of the saddle and fell to the ground.

"What the...? Is he insane?" Darkess let out a laugh as she and Rain maneuvered in an attempt to catch Luffy before he hurt himself. "Don't sprain a wing trying to catch up," Rain smirked. "He jumped on his own, he can deal with the consequences."

~ Momonosuke was walking around the clearing, looking for pretty stones to impress Nami with. He wasn't having any luck. Momonosuke lifted his head as he let out a sigh of boredom. Upon looking at the sky he noticed something was flying in their direction. His head cocked to the side as he tried to figure out what it was. Obviously it was still far away. The closer it got the larger it did as well. Momonosuke's eyes widened in fear. It must have been a huge bird that saw him off on his own and thought he would make a good meal. With a frightened shout he headed back to the others.

"Nami, save me!" Momonosuke cried out. He leapt into her arms and buried his face in her chest. "That huge bird is going to eat me."

"What huge bird?" Nami looked to the skies now. Her action was copied by Sanji, Brook and Chopper. The Heart Pirates were doing their best to ignore them. Bepo was curious enough to see what they were looking at. He too saw a huge black creature flying to them.

"Why do you think it will eat you?" Nami asked Momonosuke. It was her attempt to try and keep things calm. "You have us here and we won't let anything get to you."

"It's because I'm small," Momonosuke continued to cry. "I'm small enough to make it a convenient snack."

"Hey I'm small too," Chopper noted. "That means that it could eat me too." Sweat started to pour out of Chopper's fur in nervousness. He let out a cry and started running circles around the area. Getting into the moment, Brook also started to run around and cry out that he would be used as a toothpick.

Nami sighed and looked to Sanji. The cook was glaring at Momonosuke as if he would kill him. "Sanji, do something about that bird."

"What giant bird?" Luffy asked.

"The one that's going to eat us," Chopper cried.

"Hey Luffy," Sanji started. "Were you riding that thing?"

Luffy started to laugh, "I sure was. It's so much fun, you should try it."

"I think I'll pass."

"Luffy, you're back!" Panic forgotten, Chopper launched himself at Luffy. "I was so worried about you guys."

"It was nothing we couldn't handle," Luffy bragged.

The sound of wings broke the conversation, followed by a vibration on the ground. "Hey Luffy, next time you decide to bail warn us."

Sanji turned to the new voice. Darkess and Rain were on the outer edges of the two groups of pirates. He watched in curiosity as she removed her helmet. Instantly hearts formed in his eyes. He spun in a strange dance as he rushed to Rain's side. Once he was there he stopped and gave a gentlemanly bow. "Allow me to assist you down," he offered.

Rain blinked at the man. She instantly noticed the eyebrows he had. "You're name is Sanji, right?"

"You know me?!" Sanji looked up at her again, with hearts in his eyes.

"I've been told about you from the other members of Luffy's crew," Rain admitted.

Sanji cleared his throat and bowed once again. "May I know the name of such a beautiful woman?"

Rain's eyes widened and her cheeks reddened. Darkess gave a dragons version of a laugh. "Oh hahahaha, right back at you," Rain pushed a hand down on the top of Darkess' head. "You just like to tease." Rain looked back at Sanji. She glanced behind him to see Luffy just staring at them.

Blinking back towards Sanji, Rain began talking. "My name is Rain and this is Darkess."

"It's a pleasure to meet you Rain," Sanji cried out, ignoring Darkess all together. "I would be happy to help you down."

"I guess it's okay," Rain hesitantly said. She was expecting Sanji to offer his hand to help keep her steady, not that she needed it. What she got was far different. Before she realized what was happening Sanji had lifted her out of the saddle and was holding her bridal style.

Darkess once again started laughing as her legs gave out from under her. She was rolling on the ground now, fully enjoying Rain's predicament. "Um, you can put me down now Sanji."

With a look of disappointment, Sanji let Rain stand on her own two feet. His hand lingered across her shoulders until she physically removed it. She cleared her throat and walked towards Luffy and the others. Still giving light laughs, Darkess followed. As she passed Sanji she shouldered him. Sanji stumbled, but quickly regained his balance.

Rain joined Luffy and the others. She noticed the child and who she assumed was Chopper from everyone's description get more nervous as

Darkess approached. "I wouldn't worry about Darkess," she said. "She's a big softy."

"How can we trust you?" Momonosuke charged.

"It's alright Momo," Luffy said. He then jumped onto Darkess' back himself. "She likes humans as friends and not as dinner."

"What about reindeer?" Chopper asked.

Rain gave a reassuring smile as she moved to where Chopper 'hid' behind Nami's legs. "How would you like proof that there's nothing to worry about?"

"What sort of proof?" Chopper asked.

Rain offered her hand to Chopper. "Let me show you something," she said. Chopper slowly eased out and let Rain take a hold of his hoof. The two approached Darkess, who was now laying down and trying to appear as non-threatening as she could.

Rain let go of Chopper's hoof and got on her knees in front of Darkess. On cue, Darkess opened her mouth to show that there were no teeth. Rain reached in and pet her tongue. "As you can see, her mouth isn't big enough to make a snack out of you."

Chopper got close to Darkess' mouth and looked inside. "There are indentations here," he noted. "It's like she lost all of her teeth."

Rain pulled her hand out of Darkess' reach and put the other hand on Chopper's shoulder. "Does anyone happen to have a fish on hand?"

Bepo slowly approached the group. He had a salmon in his grip. "I was going to eat it for lunch," he said.

"I'll get you some more fish just as soon as I'm finished showing everyone they don't have to be afraid of Darkess," Rain promised. Bepo handed over his fish, surprised that Rain hadn't pointed out that he was a talking bear.

With one hand still on Chopper's shoulder she extended the other with the fish, offering it to Darkess. Darkess took small steps closer and opened her mouth. Once she was close enough, she let her teeth out and grabbed the fish from Rain. She swallowed it and licked at her mouth and teeth.

"She has retractable teeth?" Chopper asked.

Rain put her helmet on as she moved closer. "Her main food source is fish," she announced. "I would think that she would find the taste of reindeer not that appealing." Rain climbed onto Darkess' saddle once Luffy moved off. "Who wants to go with us to gather some more fish?"

Sanji raised his hand and started running closer. "I will g..."

"I'll go," Chopper interrupted. Rain scooted back so Chopper could

sit in front. She didn't think that his small arms would be able to reach around her if he needed to. Chopper climbed into the saddle with help from Luffy and held onto the grips Rain pointed out.

Rain leaned over Chopper and held onto the grips as well. "Okay girl, let's do some fishing." Darkess leapt into the air and headed for water.

Sanji's shoulders slumped and he looked defeated. It had been a perfect excuse to hold onto a woman. Yet it always seemed that they all payed more attention to Chopper. Brook sidled up next to him. "I know how you feel," he said. "I too had hoped to go along for the ride."

Nami rolled her eyes at the men. She turned to Luffy, who had been adnormally quiet. "Where are the others?" she asked.

"They're on a ship not far from here," Luffy pointed out. "Everyone is heading this way."

~ Rain decided that a side trip was called for before they went fishing. Darkess headed back towards the ship they had borrowed from Dressrosa. Everyone was on deck, waiting for some news.

When they landed, Robin walked up to them. "I'm so glad to see you Chopper," she said.

"Robin!" Chopper leapt out of the saddle and hugged Robin. He then gave his greeting to Franky, Usopp and Zoro. "I'm so happy to see all of you."

Rain turned to Law and pointed to the island. "It's Zou alright," she announced. "Luffy and I met up with the rest of his crew. Your crew is also there. That bear in your crew is a very helpful person."

Law raised an eyebrow at this. "You're not curious about how Bepo can talk?"

Rain shrugged her shoulders. "I've seen a lot of strange things. A good number of them since I joined Kagome on her quest to find her family." Rain turned to Chopper, still catching up with his friends. "I have a promise to keep," she announced. "You can stay here with everyone and join up with Luffy and the others when they do, or you can come back with me."

"I'll come with you," Chopper broke away. "I'm curious about how you plan to go fishing."

At the word fishing, Shadow perked up. Her movement drew Chopper's attention. "There's another one?" he panicked.

Rain laughed and patted Chopper's head. "That dragon is Kagome's friend," she said. "Shadow wouldn't hurt you anymore then Darkess would. It's right around lunch time so I would assume she wants to go fishing as well."

"Go ahead and take her," Kagome put in. "I'm a little busy preparing lunch for everyone here."

Rain nodded and looked to Chopper. "Still want to come along with

us?"

"You bet I do," Chopper said. Rain helped him get back into the saddle. "I'll see you all when you reach the camp. We've anchored in a cove on the other side of the island."

"We'll SUPER see you there," Franky announced. He gave them a thumbs up.

Rain nodded to everyone and urged Darkess into the sky once again. Shadow followed after them. The two dragons flew along the coast of the island. Their heads were down, watching the water.

Darkess slowed down and started to circle one area in particular. Shadow dove into the water where it was deep enough. The three still in the air waited for a few seconds. Chopper was watching the area where Shadow had dove. Soon the surface of the water started get small waves and take on a silvery hue. Chopper was surprised to see a school of fish start jumping out of the water. With a burst of water, Shadow was in the sky. Her action pushed a number of fish further into the air then what they would have achieved on their own. Rain wrapped one arm around Chopper and held onto the saddle tighter as Darkess suddenly dove for the falling fish. The two dragons repeated this until both were satisfied. Shadow returned to the ship and to Kagome while Darkess headed to the group waiting on the island. She now carried a giant tuna in her claws.

~ Sanji was pacing back and forth. "Chopper better not let anything happen to Rain," he growled. "She's such a delicate flower."

"You better not let her hear you call her that," Luffy commented. "If you spent any time with her you would know that's not true."

"Why are you so defensive?" Nami asked. "This isn't the first time that Sanji has behaved like this. You and everyone else knows that. So why are you acting so protective of her?"

"I don't really know."

A light lit in Nami's eyes. She had a feeling about what was going on, but she needed more proof and to talk to Robin. She thought about the things that had changed in Luffy over the last two years. A lot of his personality was the same, but he had matured. It seemed natural to her that he would also start taking an interest in women as well.

Thinking on Luffy reminded her of the paper they had gotten. "Luffy, there's something I should tell you. As we were sailing here a paper was dropped off. It showed a picture of a woman with long black hair and the article described her as your mother."

"I've already met her," Luffy responded.

"Oh, that's fine then. Wait, what?"

"I've already met my mom," Luffy repeated. "She and Rain were traveling together to find my dad and I. They found me first."

"How can you be sure it's your mom?" Nami asked.

"She knew things about my grandpa that no stranger would."

"We're back!" Everyone could hear Chopper calling out. Bepo stood up, excited to have his dinner now that Rain and Darkess came back from fishing. To his surprise they didn't bring back a salmon for him. Bepo's eyes widened impossibly large as he stared at the tuna that was clutched in the dragon's claws.

"I hope you don't mind tuna," Rain noticed Bepo staring. "It's hard for Darkess to carry a small fish like salmon in her claws. I hope that it's a suitable substitute."

Bepo carefully approached them as they landed. The tuna was set off to the side to give them room to land. Bepo picked up the large fish and turned to Rain. He remained silent as Rain helped Chopper out of the saddle and get down herself. Once she had her helmet off, Bepo wrapped a claw around her waist and lifted her. "I love tuna," he announced. He carefully put Rain down and patted Darkess on the head in gratitude. He then sauntered off to enjoy his meal in peace.

"Food always soothes the savage beast," Rain joked.

"I thought that was music," Nami said.

"Have you ever seen a bear hug someone over playing a song?"

"No."

"Point made."

Brook was in front of Rain at this point. "I would gladly play a song for you," he said. "If you let me see your panties."

The statement shocked Rain into silence. Darkess wasn't so shocked though. She started to walk away, but she managed to sweep her tail under Brook, knocking him over.

Rain edged closer to Nami. "Are they always like that?" she asked.

"They can get worse," Nami sighed. Momonosuke was still clutching onto her leg.

"You must be Kin'emon's son," Rain said. "He's told me a great deal about you."

"You know my father?"

"I've been traveling with him these last few days," Rain confirmed. "He and his strange friend, Kanjuro. They are looking forward to seeing you."

"Oi, everyone," Sanji got everyone's attention. "Lunch is ready." Sanji then offered his hand to Rain and bowed. It was a silent invitation to escort her. Instead of a hand he felt something hard. He looked at his hand in question, instead of a soft woman's hand there was a bare leg bone. He dropped it and started looking around. Luffy was dragging Rain off towards where the food was set up. He was

giving accolades on Sanji's cooking. When Rain wasn't looking, Luffy shot a glare at Sanji.

"What was that?" Brook wondered.

"I think someone might have been struck with the love bug," Nami said. She had a knowing smirk as she watched Sanji's reaction.

"Luffy is too uncouth to woo a lady," Sanji snapped. "I will not allow this."

"Why not leave Luffy alone?" Chopper asked. "He's never shown to have an interest in women beyond friendship. You, on the otherhand, are the exact opposite. It wouldn't kill you to concede this once and let Luffy try his hand."

"He'll give a bad name to men everywhere," Sanji growled. "He has no idea what he's doing." Brook voiced his agreement.

"The two of you are no closer to wooing a woman then you were two years ago. Let him try," Nami said. "And don't you dare try to tell him how to get on her good side. He seems to be doing alright as it is."

"Rain has no idea what he's doing," Sanji continued to press his point. "I would bet that Luffy doesn't even know what he's doing."

"All the more reason to leave them alone to figure it out. Now get over it or else."

"Yes Nami-swan."

~ Two hours later the rest of the crew arrived. Before anyone could get off the ship, Shadow leapt off and onto the island. She and Darkess immediately began to play now that there was room to run around.

"There's another dragon?" Nami screeched.

"That's Shadow," Luffy laughed. "She's my mom's dragon."

"In that case you're just like her," Sanji said as he blew out some smoke.

"He's just like who?" The group on land turned to the ship. Kagome was walking down the ramp at that moment. She stared at the group hard. "Are these your crew also Luffy?" she asked.

"They sure are," Luffy said with a grin. He put his hands behind his head.

Kagome got into Sanji's face at that moment. "How old are you?" she asked.

"I'm twenty-one," Sanji answered.

Kagome gave a little hum in thought. "Has anyone told you that smoking is bad for your health?" Luffy started laughing at

this.

"Don't be too put off by Kagome, Sanji." Robin made her way over to them. "Kagome has been keeping an eye out for all of us."

"She's means she's been mothering us," Usopp whispered in Sanji's ear. "If you don't want her to nag then don't let her see you smoke."

"What was that?" Kagome demanded.

"I was just telling Sanji how worried you are that he smokes," Usopp covered. He quickly backed away from the possibly dangerous situation.

"Also," Luffy chimed in. He put his arm around a blonde man in a blue blazer wearing a top hat with goggles around the band. "This is Sabo. He's my other big brother and he ate the Flare-Flare Fruit so that no one else will have Ace's power."

"Just how many son's did you have?" Usopp asked Kagome.

"Just Luffy," Kagome said. "Apparently he took on two older boys as his brothers when he was a child. I'm happy that he had someone that he could look up to when he needed it."

"You're too kind Lady Kagome," Sabo grinned. "Luffy isn't a bad guy when you get down to it. It was actually a pleasure taking him on as a younger brother."

It was Franky that broke the cheerful atmoshpere. "Kagome, Rain, were you two the only ones that ride dragons?" he asked.

"Outside of the East Blue we are," Kagome answered. "Why?"

"Because I think I see more dragons flying this way."

9. Dragon Riders

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****A Family of Outlaws****

Chapter Eight: Dragon Riders

Nami, Usopp, Chopper and Brook immediately began to panic. "Maybe we should leave," Nami suggested. "If they're unfriendly then who knows what will happen."

"Even if they want a fight we have two dragons here that can accomodate them," Sanji said.

"Shadow and I don't fight," Kagome said. "I've never been one for flight combat and Shadow's acid glands had been severely damaged to the point they no longer work. Her only advantage is being able to conceal herself. If those are dragons coming this way the chances are

that they're friendly. There are no dragons here besides the one that live on New Berk."

"We met a few dragons on Punk Hazard," Luffy said. "The others told me they put up a hard fight. Plus, Momo here is a dragon zoan type devil fruit eater. Those could also be devil fruit eaters."

"We should leave Straw Hatter," Law said. "We'll split up for now and meet up again. I'll take Ceasar and Jora with me."

"We're not splitting up," Luffy declared. "It's better to fight as a large group. Besides, now that we're friends you have to stick around."

"I've never agreed to being friends," Law snapped. "I've already told you that we're allies and not friends."

Luffy didn't hear Law as he was cleaning out his ear and walking towards Rain. She and Darkess were staring at the approaching figures closely. She finally pulled out her binoculars to get a better look.

"Listen to me Straw Hatter," Law seethed.

"I don't have to," Luffy childishly said. "I say that we're all friends and that's it. We're not splitting up."

"I've already told you Law," Robin said. "Once he's made up his mind then there's no changing it. You might as well accept that he's made you his friend. He won't let you split off from us either. Besides, won't it be faster and easier to achieve our goal if both our crews stick close to each other?"

Law glared at all of the Straw Hats just smiling at him. If he had known that they would be this stubborn he would have tried allying himself to one of the other rookie captains from two years ago. As it was, he had no choice except to give in.

"It doesn't matter anyway," Rain put in. "Those are friendlies coming in. You don't have to rush to split up."

"How do you know those are allies?" Law asked.

"Not allies," Rain looked to him. "Family." She then turned her attention to Kagome. "One dragon is a Stormcutter, three guesses who that is and the first two don't count. The second is a Monstrous Nightmare. Only three riders have made friends with one. The two vikings wouldn't come all the way out here."

Kagome's face broke out into a huge grin. She immediately wrapped her arms around Luffy. "It's so exciting," she cried. "Luffy, you get to meet at least your uncle!"

"His what now?" Nami asked. "You mean that there's more in Luffy's family? Just how many of you are there?"

Rain went back to looking through her binoculars and stiffened. She hastily put the device away and put up her hands. "Slow down Swift!" she cried. Her action drew the attention of everyone. She let out a giant 'oof' as a blue and green blur slammed into her stomach. She

stumbled back and fell.

Darkess was quick to join in the dog pile. Rain couldn't stop herself from laughing. She finally managed to roll into a sitting up position. In her arms, snuggling up to her, was a small dragon. "For those of you that don't know," Rain started. "This is Swift, he's a Terrible Terror and also a close companion of mine and Darkess'. He travels with us where ever we go."

"He's so small," Chopper said. "At least compared to Darkess and Shadow, is he a baby?"

"His is one of the smaller breeds of dragons that you'll find," Rain said. She was in her dragon lecture mode. "Swift is actually a fully grown adult."

"Sorry about that Rain," a male voice called. "We couldn't stop him from rushing ahead." By now the other two dragons were landing in the clearing.

"That's alright," Rain said with a smile. "I'm used to it by now."

The man that spoke jumped down and helped an elderly lady climb off of his dragon. Kagome rushed to them, she had a hold of Luffy's hand. "Mom, Souta, I'm so happy to see you guys." She let go of Luffy long enough to hug each of them. "Luffy, meet your grandmother and your Uncle Souta."

Akita pulled Luffy into a hug before he could do anything. "Look how you've grown," she gushed. She then pushed Luffy back and looked him up and down. She zeroed in on the scar on his chest. "Exactly what have you been up to young man?"

"Mom," Kagome put in. "I've already gotten after him for being reckless. He doesn't need to get a lecture from you as well."

Souta pulled Luffy away from Akita and led him to the other side of Inferno. "Don't worry about them squirt," he said.

"Squirt?" Luffy asked.

"Of course," Souta grinned. "You're my nephew and along with that comes certain privileges. Among them is the right to give you nicknames."

Rain smiled at the small family reunion as she passed them. She went up to the Stormcutter and his rider. "It's good to see you again Cloud Jumper," she patted his nose. She then looked up to the armored person on his back. "It's also good to see you again Grandma. How is Dad and Rock?"

Valka swung down with an ease that showed years of experience. She pulled off her helmet and pulled Rain into a hug. "They're doing well," she said. "Your father wanted to come himself, but he's still helping Rock establish the village and get comfortable with his position as the chief."

"He worries too much," Rain said. "As you can see, Darkess and I are just fine. Kagome and Shadow are also in one piece."

Back with the other members of the Straw Hat crew, Sabo approached Nami. "I was wondering if you had a transponder snail that I could use," he said. "Koala, Hack and I need to make a report."

"Of course," Nami said. She then pointed to the Sunny. "There's one in the lounge on board Sunny. You'll have some privacy that way."

"Thank you very much," Sabo bowed. He then headed for the ship, his two comrades following.

Inside of the lounge it was easy to find the transponder snail that Nami had talked about. Sabo picked up the receiver and put in the number that would connect him directly to Dragon.

The transponder rung four times before it was picked up. There was no answer, there wouldn't be if Dragon didn't know for sure who was calling. "This is Sabo, Koala and Hack reporting," Sabo started.

"How did things go?" Dragon's voice was heard.

"Much better than anticipated," Sabo said. The pleasure in his voice passed through to the other end of the line. "I accomplished the goal of securing the devil fruit from the Don Quixote family. In order to protect it from them trying to retake it I ate the Flare-Flare fruit and gained its powers. Luffy is safe, he fought Doflamingo and had some back up from a woman by the name of Rain."

"I've not heard of her," Dragon commented. "Is she a new member of Luffy's crew?"

"Not that I know of," Sabo answered. He then developed the biggest grin he could. "She's actually the traveling companion to one Monkey-Higarashi Kagome."

There was complete silence on the other line. After a minute Dragon finally spoke again. "Is she there with you now?"

"Kagome isn't with me right now," Sabo said. "But I have been traveling with her and Luffy. Right now she's introducing him to other members of her family. I believe one is her mother and the other her brother."

"Are their names Souta and Akita?"

"That's correct."

"Don't disturb them for the moment. Where are all of you right now?"

"We're on the island of Zou," Sabo answered. "I'm not sure how long we'll be here though."

"Where do you plan to go next?"

"Kagome has declared to all of them that they will let me bring her and Luffy to you. We'll be on our way to Headquarters shortly."

"Very good," Dragon sounded relieved. "Sabo, don't tell them of this conversation."

"Sir?"

"I find myself in a playful mood. I will see you all soon." Before Sabo could respond the connection was lost and the line went dead.

"Should we be worried?" Koala asked. "I didn't think that Leader had a playful mood."

"Did you think that he had a family?"

"Not really."

"Our leader is just full of surprises. We'll let him have his fun. We'll just tell everyone that we couldn't get through."

"Do you think that they'll believe you?" Hack asked. "We have been in here for a while."

"So we tried to call several times," Sabo shrugged. "I don't see anything wrong with that." The three then made their way out to rejoin the others.

~ Rain stared at the way that Kagome was smothering Luffy. She closed her eyes, she had to stop her thoughts from straying. Valka had noticed the way she looked and knew immediately what was wrong. She put her hand on Rain's shoulder to draw her attention. "When was the last time that you and Darkess had been given any real challenge?"

"Not since before we left New Berk," Rain answered.

"Then it's time for a refresher course," Valka urged. "The two of you better get in the sky quick. Cloud Jumper and I will only give you so long to get a safe distance from everyone." She then swung onto Cloud Jumper's back and the two were into the sky.

Rain could only stand there for a second. The sound of Darkess chattering excitedly broke her out of it. Her dragon had the saddle facing her and she was dancing on her feet, ready to go. Rain had a huge grin on her face as she put her helmet on and leapt onto Darkess' back. The two bolted up into the sky and started to head out to sea. Cloud Jumper and Valka already way ahead of the two of them.

~ "Did anyone else see the look on Rain's face?" Nami asked.

"I have seen it a time or two," Robin said. "She hides it very well, but I do believe she's jealous."

"Jealous of what?" Usopp asked.

"Luffy of course," Robin answered. "Here he is, newly united with his mother. Despite her being very strict, the two seem to be very happy. Rain knows that she will never have that same opportunity with her own mother."

"Why can't she?" Sanji asked.

"You can't let Rain know that Kagome told us about her past," Robin warned. Once she got nods from all of those that hadn't heard the story the first time, including a newly returned Bepo, she continued. "Rain's mother died trying to protect her when she was an infant."

Sanji instantly started sniffing. "It's so tragic," he cried. "I must go to her and comfort her in her time of despair." He was silenced by Nami elbowing him on the top of the head.

~ "Where are they going?" Luffy asked. He had noticed the dragon with four wings leaving, only to be followed soon after by Rain and Darkess.

"No where we want to be," Akita said. She and coming came around to join Souta and Luffy. "Most likely Valka and Cloud Jumper are going to test Rain and Darkess on their skills. It's not a match that we want to get involved with."

"Of course we want to be involved," Luffy cheered. "It's fun to ride with Rain and Darkess."

"Has Rain let you ride Darkess alone?" Souta asked.

Luffy folded his hands across his chest. "She did offer once," Luffy admitted. He had a serious look on his face. "I think that it was yesterday. It's more fun to ride with Rain though."

Souta and Akita shared a look. The two then looked to Kagome. She had stars in her eyes. The two backed up a step, knowing what Kagome was thinking. "Then you shouldn't waste any time," Kagome said suddenly. "Souta, take Luffy up there and join them. You and Inferno could use the practice too. You need all the fighting skills you can get."

"I have plenty of skills," Souta argued. "And getting more everyday. Two of my kids took after their mother, you know. Do you have any idea how many fights I have to break up everyday?"

"Just get up there," Kagome ordered.

Having seen this side of his sister before, Souta rushed onto Inferno. "Let's go squirt," he said. "We need to catch up before they really start sparring in the air." Luffy was quick to jump up behind Souta and they were in the sky.

"So are you thinking what I'm thinking?" Akita asked Kagome once they were out of earshot.

"I'm thinking that I might actually gain Rain as a daughter," Kagome grinned.

"That's what I thought."

~ Rain and Darkess were using the clouds as an obstacle course to warm up once Cloud Jumper and Valka decided to start the match. As the excitement and anticipation grew the two got more daring in their maneuvers. When the two leveled out, Darkess felt a weight on her

back being added. She looked up to see Luffy behind Rain with a grin.

"When is the party starting?" he asked.

"What are you doing here?" Rain asked. "You should be spending time with your family."

Luffy lost his grin and stared right into Rain's eyes seriously. The action caused Rain to freeze, she wasn't used to this side of Luffy being directed towards her. "You don't want me here?" Luffy asked. He still held Rain's gaze with his own.

"I didn't say that," Rain managed. "I only meant that family is important."

"You're important."

Before Rain could call him out on that statement Cloud Jumper swooped in. The match had started and there was no time to have a conversation. Darkess dove down into a free fall. The speed of the action made Luffy put his arms around Rain's waist. Rain was glad for the helmet, it hid her blush.

Valka had noticed the instant that Rain had gained a passenger. She was about to call off the match when Souta and Inferno came up alongside them. "He wants to be with her," Souta informed. "Even if they were to be in a fight, he wants to fly with them."

Souta's unspoken words didn't pass Valka. She caught the hidden meaning. Now it was her and Cloud Jumper's mission to distract Rain and possibly give them a chance to get closer. The two dove for the attack. It would be best to take them by surprise. Sudden actions often made people grab the nearest thing or person. Valka smiled when she caught sight of Luffy holding onto Rain tightly as they dove. Now if only she could get him to lean in closer, her job would be done for the day.

Luffy cheered the entire time that they fought and dodged in a mock battle. Darkess had gone faster than she had with him on her before. An attack from behind caused the two riders to duck down to avoid it. This, of course, meant that Luffy was now leaning over top of Rain. Valka had accomplished her goal. Souta could only watch and be amazed at the conniving ways of women. He was glad his wife wasn't here to help. Chances would be she would just lock the two in a room.

~ After a while the three dragons landed. Kagome went up to Valka and Souta. "How did it go?" she asked in a whisper.

"How you women get away with things I'll never know," Souta said.

"It went like a charm," Valka praised. "There seemed to be a moment when it looked like Rain would fight it, but that's when I started the match. She had no time to change Luffy's mind."

"Perfect," Kagome praised. "Now, we just need a few more moments, added incentives, situations that neither can escape from."

"I honestly don't think that boy of yours will try to run from Rain,"

Valka said. "Rain on the other hand... You know how Rock is. Every last one of the boys his or Rain's age are afraid for their lives. He doesn't let anyone near his baby sister, at least not before they beat him in a dragon race. So Rain has no experience in dealing with men. If Luffy keeps up the pressure then it won't be long before Rain is bringing him back to New Berk to meet her father and brother. You should prepare him for that."

"He'll be ready," Kagome vowed. "You just make sure that those two know that there's a possibility of romance while she's out from under their noses."

"I don't think I will," Valka disagreed. "What if it has the opposite effect of what you want? Rock will come charging in, declaring that it's unsafe for his little sister and that she needs to come home."

"Good point," Kagome conceded. "Well, how about at least convincing them that not every conflict can be resolved with a dragon race?"

"I'll try my best," Valka said. "I won't make any promises though."

~ The Straw Hat crew watched as the dragons landed after their spar. Nami grinned at the sight of Luffy holding onto Rain, even though there was no need once they started to come in. She nudged Robin who was next to her. A silent conversation passed between the two women. Of all the men that was in their group, Luffy was easily one of the more desirable among them. In terms of chivalry Sanji beat all of them, even though he was a bit of a pervert. Luffy was good natured and just all around a good guy. Though Usopp was a good guy he was still a habitual liar, besides he still had a thing for the rich girl back at his home island. Brook was dead, he was out of the running. Franky was just weird in both of their opinions. Then finally there was Zoro. The two women were sure that he would forever remain a loner.

Nami and Robin turned to face Sanji when he started to growl. He took two steps towards Luffy, only to find himself tripping. A pair of hands grew out of the ground and held his feet in place. Sanji soon found himself kissing the dirt.

Nami leaned over Sanji, a look of malice on her face. "You will leave him alone," she ordered. "Luffy has done a lot for all of us. It's time that we did something for him in return. Even if it's so little as to stay out of his way."

"But Nami-swan..."

"I would imagine that it would be difficult to cook without your precious knives," Robin commented.

"You wouldn't touch something as sacred as a chef's knife set," Sanji challenged. He was only hoping that Robin was bluffing. He didn't have a lot of hope though, knowing Robin.

"Would you care to test that theory?"

Sanji put his face back in the dirt. "Fine, have it your way. I'll

let Luffy try to romance Rain." His head came back up to look at them. "However, should he fail then I'm free to try."

The two women looked at each other and then back down to Sanji. Robin released her hold on his feet. "It's an acceptable compromise," Nami said. "You have to wait for Rain to say the words that she isn't interested in Luffy in that way though."

"Fine, fine."

~ Darkess landed not too far behind Cloud Jumper and Inferno. Rain still had a tight grip on the saddle though. She was frozen in her seat due to Luffy still holding her around the waist. "That was fun," Luffy cheered.

Slowly, Luffy finally released Rain from his grip. Once he was off of the saddle Rain followed. Once she had taken off her helmet Luffy grabbed her hand. He started to lead her towards the Thousand Sunny. "You haven't seen the ship yet," he announced. "I'll give you a tour of the Sunny."

Nami and Robin followed after at a distance. They watched as Luffy showed Rain his favorite place to sit, the kitchen, lounge, bathing suite, women's sleeping quarters, the door to the men's quarters, the crow's nest and exercise room and finally the soldier docking system.

While Luffy was giving Rain the tour Sabo had everyone board their respective ships. It was time for them to start moving. There was no point in staying since the supplies had been gathered, everyone had reunited and there was still the worry of the Marines chasing them from Dressrosa.

Neither ship was large enough to carry all of the dragons though. A makeshift raft was made of trees cut down by Zoro and tied together by Franky. In the end it looked like an elegant barge. Inferno and Shadow were content to ride on the barge while Darkess and Cloud Jumper were on the Sunny.

When Luffy and Rain came up from the tour everyone was ready to set sail. "Everyone," Luffy took charge of the Sunny once Zoro told him they were ready. "Let's set sail. Sabo, you point us in the direction we need to go. We've got to bring my parents back together."

Sabo smirked as he turned to Franky at the helm. He handed him an Eternal Post. Franky studied it for a moment. "There's no label on this," he said.

"Of course there isn't," Sabo said. "We don't keep our base a secret by having posts that could be stolen with the name 'Revolutionary HQ' on it." Franky nodded in acceptance as the sails were unfurled. Usopp and Bortolomeo had that task once again. Zoro took up his job of pulling up the anchor. Sanji went into the kitchen, he was going to be busy with so many mouths to feed. Nami took over navigation as usual. Chopper went into his office and began taking inventory. Brook played an upbeat melody to mark the occasion. Robin gave Kagome, Akita, Valka and Souta a tour of the Sunny.

On shore Kin'emon, Momonosuke and Kanjuro waved to the two ships as they left. The three warriors from Wan had finally reached their

destination. It took them several weeks to make it, but they were finally there. As the ships were leaving the cove Kin'emon realized something. "Swordsman!" he yelled out. "Give back our nations national treasure!"

"I don't think he heard you," Momonosuke said. The two adult males broke into tears over the loss of such an important relic.

~ Once they were out at sea and moving at full speed Luffy looked around the deck. Rain was making her way towards the look out tower. She was studying the structure and wondering if it could hold Darkess' weight on the roof. Luffy rushed to Rain and took a hold of her hand. "You've got to see this view," he said. Luffy then pulled Rain to the front of the ship.

The two climbed up onto the figurehead. Luffy sat down, still holding Rain's hand. He pulled down, indicating that Rain should sit with him. Once she was seated he still didn't release her hand.

Usopp was carrying a crate of soy sauce from the bay to the kitchen on Sanji's request when he noticed something odd. He saw Luffy sharing his seat on the figurehead with Rain. Usopp let out a scream as he dropped the crate. "What's wrong?" Robin came up. She was followed by Kagome and the others.

"The world is coming to an end," Usopp announced. He was pointing towards Luffy and Rain.

Robin looked and put a hand to her chin. "Isn't that cute?" she smiled.

"What's so important about that?" Souta asked.

"The captain never let's anyone sit on the figurehead besides himself," Robin explained. "He's very protective of it. For him to not only let Rain sit there, but to sit there with him means a lot." Kagome, Akita and Valka broke into smiles. All the women on board, minus Rain, now had a common goal to work towards.

~ A few hours later, Zoro was watching the horizon that they were sailing towards. Something caught his eye on the water, another ship was coming their way. He went over to the speaker system. "Ship dead ahead," he announced.

Everyone went into action preparing for the worse, except for Sabo, Koala and Hack. "You can all relax," Sabo said. "That ship is one of ours."

"How can you be so sure?" Nami asked.

Sabo had a pair of binoculars he was looking through. "They're flying the flag of the Revolutionaries," he announced. "They won't start a fight with us."

Luffy took Sabo at his word. If he said they weren't going to attack then they weren't. He took up his place on the figurehead again, hand still keeping a tight grip on Rain's.

In a short while the ship passed the two groups of pirates, only to turn around and sail alongside. Sabo and Hack tied lines from the

ship to the Sunny, with Luffy's permission. Once the ships paces matched a ramp was spread across both of them.

A man in an olive green cloaked came across. His face was completely hidden. Kagome, however, held her breath in anticipation. Ever so slowly the hood came down to reveal Dragon. Before he could say anything, Kagome was in his arms, crying for joy. Luffy left his place on the figurehead to find out what was going on. Rain followed after him.

"I've missed you so much," Kagome was saying. "I'm so glad to finally have found you."

"I'm happy to see you as well," Dragon said. "I trust that you're uninjured."

"I'm fit as a fiddle," Kagome smiled. She leaned back and looked behind. Luffy was there, a confused look on his face. "Luffy, this is Dragon. He's the leader of the Revolutionary Army. More importantly, he's your father."

Luffy wasn't sure what to do. He only knew his grandfather as he grew up. His mother had a good excuse to be away, but he wasn't so sure that his father did. He was at a cross-roads.

Dragon, sensing his son's discomfort, decided to take the lead. "I'm proud to see you've come this far since Loguetown," he said. "I'm sorry that I haven't been there for you. I'm sure you'll agree with me when I say I wanted to make the world a better place for you and your mother. I've read the paper on your adventures. You're no stranger to how the Celestial Dragons treat people they see as lesser than themselves. I'm working to change all of that for you and your mother."

Luffy took in a deep breath and slowly let it out. The past was just that, past. Now he's met both of his parents and they were together. It didn't change his goal of becoming The King of the Pirates. It just meant that he now knew where he came from and why he had grown up the way he had. Luffy smiled and nodded his acceptance of his father.

"Why did you come out to meet us?" Kagome asked. "We were on our way to you."

"I came to save these kids," Dragon said. "I'm sure that you've been mothering them all."

"THANK YOU!" chourused from around the ship.

"Hey!" Kagome looked indignant as Dragon laughed.

Rain stood off to the side with Valka as they watched what was happening. "When were you planning to return to Berk?" she asked.

Valka looked at Rain out of the corner of her eye. "We had planned to see Kagome meet up with Dragon at his base," she said. "So far we've only met up with Dragon. I want to make sure that Kagome is settled in happily before leaving."

"I will be joining you," Rain said. "I was only given permission to help Kagome find her family. Now that they're together I'm sure Dad will be expecting me to return."

"He would understand if you didn't want to," Valka said.

"Why wouldn't I want to?"

Valka focused her attention on Luffy. "Perhaps you would want to stay for someone."

Rain followed Valka's gaze. "I don't know grandma," she said.

"Think about it," Valka said. "Don't rush in a decision like this. If you decide you want to stay then I will explain things back home. You're an adult and have the right to decide to do things for yourself. Don't base your decision on what others want you to do, base it on what you want to do. Don't think like the daughter of the chief, think like an independant woman."

"I'll think on it," Rain promised.

"That's all I ask."

**Kudos to chibi-Clar for the idea of Dragon meeting up with Kagome.**

10. Revolutionary Headquarters

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A Family of Outlaws

Chapter Nine: Revolutionary Headquarters

The morning two days later. A loud shout of joy woke everyone on the three ships. In the captain's cabin of the Revolutionaries ship Dragon sat bolt upright from his sleep. "It's okay," Kagome mumbled from next to him. "Luffy is just excited."

"What would he have to be so excited about?" Dragon turned to his wife.

"As of today he's no longer grounded."

"You grounded our adult son?"

Kagome opened her eyes and stared at Dragon. "You have a problem with that?"

"No, no, just checking."

"I didn't think so."

~ "Hey Luffy," Zoro called from the watch tower. "Why are you so loud this early in the morning?"

"I'm not grounded any more," Luffy announced.

"You were grounded?" Sanji walked up. "Well, now a few things make sense. Like why you didn't go fishing with Usopp." Sanji looked around as people started to exit the cabins. "I might as well get breakfast started now that everyone is awake." Sanji started to saunter off towards the kitchen.

"Yay, breakfast!"

"Straw Hatter," Law called from the deck of his submarine. "Must you be so loud in the morning? We could hear you through the steel hull of our sub."

"I can't help it Tra-guy," Luffy smiled.

He was suddenly seeing stars as he clutched the top of his head in pain and bent down. "Next time wait until everyone is awake," Nami growled. She stood over the captain, glaring at him.

"Sorry Nami," Luffy whimpered.

Robin also emerged from the cabin of the ship. She was making her way to make some coffee. She was beaten to the punch when Sanji appeared with a tray of fine china with the desired beverage. There were four cups on the tray. "Would you like some coffee Robin-chan?" Sanji offered her the tray.

"Thank you Sanji," Robin smiled. She grabbed a cup and took a cautious sip. As usual it was the perfect temperature when Sanji made it.

"Nami-swan, I made some coffee for you." Sanji rushed to Nami's side without spilling a drop. "For you my lady," he offered.

Nami took a cup absent-mindedly as she stared out at the horizon. "There's going to be a big storm this afternoon," she mumbled.

Sanji looked in the same direction as Nami. He couldn't see what she could, but he trusted Nami's skills as the navigator. She has never been wrong before.

"Where's Rain?" Luffy asked.

Sanji let out a sigh. It would figure that she would be the first person that Luffy would be looking for. He turned around and glanced around the ship. Rain was nowhere to be seen. Neither was Valka or either of their dragons.

"Inferno isn't on the barge," Usopp announced.

Luffy started panicking and ran from one end of the ship to the other. "Where are they?" He started looking in hiding places, including under the seats of the lounge. "I doubt she's under there Luffy," Chopper stated.

"They wouldn't leave without saying 'good-bye' would they?" Nami asked.

"Of course they wouldn't," Kagome called to them. She and Dragon were now on the deck of his ship, crossing over to the Sunny. "Didn't any of you notice that Shadow is gone too?"

"Honestly, no," Usopp stated. "Luffy is too busy panicking over Rain missing."

Kagome laughed and shook her head. "I suppose it's to be expected. After all, only one of you has ever been awake at this time of day." Kagome focused her attention on Robin, who hadn't moved from her place sipping her coffee. "Would you just let Luffy continue to panic like that?"

"Only until he came close to me," Robin said. At this time Luffy had stopped panicking and was paying attention to what was being said. "At dawn, without fail, all the dragons wake for the day. In Darkess' case, being nocturnal, get's more edgy. The dragons then will either go for a flight or will wake their riders to go on a flight with them. More often than not, Darkess wakes Rain to join her. I would imagine that they would be back any time now."

Luffy immediately climbed to the lookout tower and started going back and forth, searching the sky. Zoro did his best to stay out of his way. He didn't want to get plowed over by Luffy.

Souta joined everyone on the Sunny with a yawn. "If I knew I would wake up this early I would have asked Inferno to wake me for his morning stretch. It's more relaxing than what's going on now." He watched Luffy running back and forth in the tower. "What is going on now?"

"Luffy is upset he doesn't know where Rain is," Kagome smiled.

"Is that so?" Akita joined in. A huge grin was also plastered to her face.

Souta shook his head and went to join Usopp at the aft of the Sunny. "Women are scary sometimes," he muttered as he stood next to Usopp.

"Try living day-to-day with Nami," Usopp said. "I'm surprised none of us have been hospitalized yet."

"From what I've seen, you better not let her hear you say that."

"So true."

Bortolomeo finally came out of the men's cabin. He was wide awake and armed to the teeth. "Why do you have all that stuff?" Franky asked from behind him.

"Luffy-sempai has been yelling," Bortolomeo said. "I thought that we were under attack."

"If we were he would be laughing," Chopper informed. "Right now it's most likely he lost his hat."

"What? Luffy-sempai can't loose his hat," Bortolomeo started looking around the ship.

"You can relax rooster," Sanji stopped him. "Luffy isn't looking for his hat. He's looking for Rain."

"Then he still needs my help," Bortolomeo said. He had a tone of confidence. "Luffy-sempai needs help in relocating his lady friend."

"Is he for real?" Usopp asked.

"Seems like," Souta said. "I don't envy you guys for having him on board. I bet he would go above and beyond just to make Luffy happy."

"That's what worries me."

In a flurry of motion the dragons landed on their respective ships. Shadow landed on the Revolutionary ship, causing a stir among them. Inferno landed on the barge, but lifted his head and nudged Souta since he was conveniently close by. Cloud Jumper and Darkess landed on the deck of the Sunny. Valka and Rain fully geared on their backs.

"What is going on?" Rain asked. As soon as her feet touched the deck she was wrapped in a tight hug. Luffy had come from out of nowhere. All of the women watched this with pleased smirks. Sanji and Brook were glowering at Luffy for getting a hug. Everyone else went about their daily business.

Sabo was crossing over to the Sunny. "Leader, I have a report from the Helm's man. He says that we're half a day away from Headquarters."

"That's a good thing," Nami cut in. "We need to get there as soon as possible. We don't want to be out on open water this afternoon. There's a huge storm coming that could sink all of us. Well, maybe not Tra-guy if they submerge."

"I'm not surprised there will be a storm," Valka walked up. "There was a red sky at dawn this morning."

Nami visibly paled while everyone else in the area looked confused. "What does that have to do with anything?" Bortolomeo asked.

"We have an old saying on Berk," Valka said. "Before our ancestors settled they were sea nomads, or sailors if you prefer. The proverb goes, 'Red sky at night, ships delight. Red sky in morning, ships warning.' It basically means that a red sky at night means good weather and a red sky in the morning means bad weather."

"I still don't get it," Bartolomeo flatpanned.

"It's all in the pressure system," Nami explained. "A good wind moves from west to east. This also applies to normal storms. If the sun setting casts a red glow then that means the wind and pressure system are normal since it's in the west. If it's in the east, that means that a system has just moved east. Lot's of moisture is in the air and that means heavy rain."

Sanji got hearts in his eyes as Nami once again proved her skills as a navigator. "You're so reliable Nami-Swan," he cheered.

Dragon nodded in understanding and turned to Sabo. "Give the order to travel at full speed," he said. "I want to reach the island before the storm."

"Aye-aye," Sabo grinned. He then left to carry out his duties.

Luffy didn't let go of Rain until she returned his hug. Even then it took a few minutes. Once she was finally released she blinked at Luffy. "What was that for?" she asked.

"I thought you left," Luffy said. "You didn't say anything to anyone. You were just gone once everyone was awake."

"I leave like that every morning," Rain said. "Darkess likes to take us both out."

"Next time don't leave without telling me," Luffy ordered. "I wouldn't be able to handle it if something happened to you."

Rain's eyes widened at the order. Then they narrowed in on him. "Now wait just a moment," she said. She started to poke Luffy in the chest. "Who do you think you are to give me orders like that?"

"I'm the captain," Luffy answered.

"That's besides the point," Rain said. "You don't run my life anymore then my father and brother do. If I want to go for a morning flight then I will. I don't need your permission to do so."

"I didn't say to ask for permission," Luffy came back. "I just want to know you're safe. We have a lot of enemies now, that includes Marines. They could use you to get to us, to me."

"I've said it before," Rain drawled back. "Darkess is too fast for them to follow let alone catch. If I want to swoop past a Marine ship, wave 'hello' then I will do just that."

Dragon's laughter broke up the argument. "You raised her alright," he managed. He was looking down at Kagome at this point. "I remember a similar argument between the two of us when we first learned Luffy was on the way." Kagome joined in the laughter. Rain blushed and looked to the side while Luffy looked confused.

~ Just before lunch the Revolutionary Headquarters was spotted by a look out on Dragon's ship. It was a relief to Nami since the skies had started to darken. Dragon's ship took the lead, making sure that none of the island's defenses attack the Straw Hat or Heart Pirates.

Once all the ships were docked, Ceasar and Jora were taken into the custody of the Revolutionaries. Dragon took Luffy and Kagome on a tour of the building. Robin offered to show everyone else around. The sound of thunder and lightning flashing followed them inside.

"How do you know where you're going?" Usopp asked.

"I spent those two years training here," Robin explained. "I was offered a place to stay here by Dragon himself." As she started to lead the way, Robin noticed that Rain and Valka weren't coming. "You

two aren't going to stay here, are you?"

"Someone needs to look after the dragons," Rain answered. "Take a look around the area. There's a lot of curious eyes about. We wouldn't want anyone to accidentally spook one of them and cause havoc. You don't want to see a Monstrous Nightmire angry."

"Only one of you needs to stay," Robin pointed out.

"Why should one be forced to stay behind?" Rain also pointed out. "It makes them feel unwanted. It's just better if two humans stay behind, watching from different directions and all that."

Robin could no longer refute Rain's logic. She simply nodded to the two and continued to give a tour to the others. "You could have gone with them," Valka said.

"I still haven't come to a decision to stay or go," Rain sighed. "It's better not to get too close to anyone else if I leave."

"I think that you should stay."

"Grandma?"

"That young man is smitten with you," Valka said with a grin. "Though, I don't think that he realizes that yet. He's got an air of innocence to him." She laughed at Rain's blank look. "You're innocent as well. Rock didn't do you any favors by keeping the boys away. You don't recognize when someone is interested in you."

"How can you be so sure?"

"I haven't seen Luffy hug any other woman," Valka pointed out. "Not even his own mother, at least not willingly. He allows her to hug him in that case. Also, the way he panicked this morning when he thought you had left. I don't think that he'll let you leave so easily if that's what you decide."

"I suppose we'll have to wait and see."

` That night, after the storm passed, a banquet was set up out in the open to celebrate Dragon being reunited with his family. Everyone was anxious to meet Kagome and Luffy. So many people were demanding their attention that Luffy wasn't able to break away and find his crew.

The Straw Hats were busy with their own number of fans. A number of people had wanted tours of the ship, stories of their adventures and an idea of what it was like to travel with a captain that had such a high bounty on his head.

Of course, Valka and Rain weren't given much peace either. Questions about dragons came in from all directions. Were they dangerous? How fast were they? What they ate? When did they sleep? How did they ever manage to train and ride them? The only group that seemed to be able to just relax were the Heart Pirates. That suited Law just fine. He didn't like to be the center of attention.

Rain and Darkess snuck out of the banquet area when no one was looking. They found a nice set of cliffs to just sit and relax on

that no one could reach without being able to fly in some way.

"What do you think Darkess?" Rain asked. Her closest friend lay next to her, staring out to the water. "Should we stay with Kagome, the Straw Hats or do we return with Grandma and Cloud Jumper?" Darkess let out a groan and put her head on the ground. "I don't know either," Rain sighed. "I know the logical thing to do would be to return home. I helped Kagome find her family, just like we set out to do. I'm sure that she'll want to take the time to get to know Dragon once again and to spend quality time with Luffy. She wouldn't want me to hang around just because I'm attached to her. She may have helped raise Rock and I, but she always made it clear she wasn't our mother.

"Then there's the Straw Hats. Why would they want me to hang around? They haven't seen us in a true fight, not really. Luffy was with us when we charged through the palace, but most of the enemy ran. I guess the sight of a dragon was too much for them. None of the others have a reason to accept us. Unless we're in a fight I suppose we would be useless and in the way. We have nothing to offer them besides arial combat. They don't even seem to need that." Rain moved so that she was leaning up against the side of Darkess. She stretched back and looked up to the stars. The sky had a crisp and fresh feeling after that storm in the afternoon.

"I suppose the logical thing would be to go home," Rain whispered. Darkess let out a groan and put her head in Rain's lap. "I know girl, I'll miss them too." Rain patted Darkess on the head. It wasn't long before the heat radiating from Darkess soothed Rain into a slumber.

~ The banquet was winding down and Valka was starting to get worried. She hadn't seen Rain or Darkess in at least two hours. She spotted Souta not too far off, trying to get some of the fangirls off of him and away from Inferno. Valka walked up to him. "I need a favor," she called.

Both Souta and Inferno rushed over as the fangirls let out noises of disappointment. "I can't thank you enough," Souta gasped. Even Inferno looked a little shaken. "What favor did you need?"

"I just need you to keep an eye on Shadow," Valka grinned.

Souta looked at her confused then towards Shadow. The Changeling was happily eating fish fed to her by some of the Revolutionaries, though never straying too far from where Kagome was. "She looks fine to me."

"No worries then," Valka said. "You can go back to your fangirls."

"I'll keep an eye on Shadow," Souta amended. Inferno was quick to agree.

Without another word, Valka swung onto Cloud Jumper's back and the two were off. They started out by circling the island. It was within a few minutes that they happened to see Rain on one of the cliffs. Darkess blended easily with the rocks, but Rain's hair stood out without her helmet on.

As the two flew in closer Darkess perked her head up to look at them. She then looked towards Rain then back up. Valka got the message Darkess was sending. She didn't want to wake Rain up. Valka nodded to Darkess as she and Cloud Jumper started to fly away. They would fly around for a little while, make it seem like it was an everyday occurrence and that nothing unusual had happened. The younger of the dragon riders on this island was safe and that was all that mattered.

~ Bortolomeo wasn't used to so many people. He had to get up and stretch. He supposed that the Straw Hats tended to draw a crowd wherever they went. That wasn't too surprising. What surprised him the most was that he was getting attention now too.

As he went for a walk he spotted a set of cliffs on the other side of a beach. It wasn't a surprise there would be cliffs. What surprised Bortolomeo was a small blonde dot on the top of the cliffs. He squinted, hoping to get a better look.

As he stood and watched one of the dragon riders had shown up. She and her dragon flew in front of the cliffs for a moment and then left. He managed to see the profile of a black dragon's head lift from the rocks. It didn't take long for him to figure out who was up there at that point. A grin spread across his features as an idea came to him. He hurried back to the banquet.

Bortolomeo looked all around, but he couldn't find his target anywhere. Sanji was the first one to notice his strange behavior. "Try looking behind some of the barrels first," he suggested. "If that doesn't work, the kitchen followed by the storeroom."

"You know what I'm doing?" Bortolomeo asked in shock.

"I don't know what you're doing." Sanji lit a cigarette and inhaled. It wasn't until he let out his breath that he continued. "You have a one track mind though. You're looking for Luffy, for whatever reason. He's been crowded so much that he's gone looking for a place to hide. If he hasn't been found by someone else then he would be behind the barrels first."

"Thanks a lot," Bortolomeo cheered as he ran in the indicated direction. "Luffy will owe you a lot for this one."

"Why would Luffy owe me?" Sanji wondered to himself.

Bortolomeo spent half an hour looking around for Luffy. He finally found him in the storeroom, behind some barrels. "Luffy-sempai," he called out. "I need your help." Luffy cautiously poked his head above the barrels, his eyes shifting and looking for danger. "I need your help with Rain."

That caught Luffy's undivided attention. "What about Rain?" he asked.

"I was out for a walk when I spotted her and Darkess on a cliff," Bortolomeo started. "It looked like they had fallen asleep. If they stay out there all night then they might get sick. I can't reach them, though. I thought that you might be able to."

"Where is the cliff?" Bortolomeo gave Luffy the directions that he

needed and Luffy was gone. Bortolomeo had a satisfied look on his face. He was so sure that Luffy would let him join the crew after this.

~ Luffy found the cliff Bortolomeo described. He had to do a lot of hiding and jumping from one shadow to the next, but he managed to make it. Luffy stretched out his hands and pulled himself to the top of the cliff. He stood and looked at the scene in front of him. Rain was sleeping against Darkess. Darkess, however, was looking directly at him.

Luffy nodded towards Darkess and took a seat next to Rain. Once Darkess put her head back down in acceptance of his presence Luffy leaned back as well. He covered his face with his hat and was soon asleep as well.

~ The next morning Luffy awoke to his shoulder being nudged. He lifted his hat and found that Darkess was using her tail to wake him. It was already daylight out. Luffy stood with a stretch. He got down on his haunches and started to gently shake Rain's shoulder to wake her up.

Rain's eyes fluttered open and stared into Luffy's own. She glanced around and noticed that it was already morning. With a yawn, she sat up from Darkess. Once all the weight was off of her Darkess also stood up and stretched.

"Have you guys been looking for me?" Rain asked.

"Not really," Luffy answered. "Bortolomeo saw where you were last night and told me where I could find you. We should go back though. I know that some of the others are anxious to get started."

Rain nodded as she climbed onto Darkess. Luffy was right behind her and had his arms around her waist as soon as he was settled. Darkess leapt off of the cliffs and simply glided back to the dock, in no hurry.

When they arrived they found everyone already waiting for them. Sanji and Brook were glaring over at Luffy. All of the women looked quite pleased. Dragon and Sabo were smirking. "What is everyone looking at?" Rain asked.

Valka had told them that Rain was asleep and Bortolomeo then informed them he sent Luffy to her. They all assumed that they spent the night out together. "I woke Rain up this morning," Luffy explained. "We need to get going today."

Everyone took on looks of understanding. Luffy had taken the opportunity and slept by Rain while she was unaware. Darkess had been there so Valka and Kagome weren't worried about any funny business.

Off to the side were Valka, Souta and Akita. They were getting ready to head back to Berk. Rain looked to her grandmother and nodded. She and Darkess then moved to join them. "Where are you going Rain?" Luffy asked.

Rain turned back to look at everyone. "I'm going home with my grandma. I just want to tell you all that I enjoyed getting to know

all of you. If you're ever in the East Blue you should look Berk up."

"What are you talking about?" Luffy demanded. He had that serious look fixed on Rain again.

"I'm heading back," Rain announced again. "I was supposed to help Kagome find her family. Now that she has there's no reason for me to make a nuisance of myself."

"You're not a nuisance," Sanji and Brook argued.

Chopper ran up and hugged Rain around one of her legs. "You can't leave," he cried. "You're a part of the crew now."

"I'm a what?" Rain was floored by the teary eyed talking reindeer.

"You heard him," Luffy said. He walked up to stand just in front of Rain. "You fought with us, you had fun with us, you ate with us. That makes you a part of this crew."

"Glad to know I'm not the only one he does it to," Law said from off to the side. He was growing slightly impatient though.

"You're a member of the Straw Hats now," Luffy announced. "You're not allowed to just leave the crew without my say-so. Those are the rules of the pirates, once a crewmember, only death or the captain's words can declare otherwise."

"You just decided to make me a member of your crew without asking," Rain said. "I really don't think that counts."

"It counts to Luffy," Nami said. She and Robin had a bag. Inside were some of the things that Rain kept in her saddle bags. Swift was perched on Usopp's head.

"When did you get my stuff?" Rain asked.

"We had a little help while you weren't looking yesterday," Nami winked. Rain turned sharply to look at Darkess. The Night Fury was conveniently watching a flock of sea gulls fly. This caused Valka to laugh.

"Just because you all decided this doesn't make it so," Rain argued. "I helped Kagome and she doesn't need me anymore. You don't need me either, all of you are capable fighters. Berk needs me, they need all the help they can get now that I'm available."

"We're heading back to Berk," Souta pointed out. "When we left there wasn't much that needed to be done. I'm sure there will be even less once we get back. I know the villagers will be happy to see you, but I doubt that they'll need your help. With your father and Rock there everything is pretty stable."

"We need you with the Straw Hats Rain," Luffy declared. He put one hand on Rain's shoulder. "You've become a part of this crew."

"I just don't know," Rain sighed.

"Alright then," Luffy stood straight. His hand was still on Rain's shoulder. The other Straw Hats looked at him in shock. They began to think that he would let Rain go. Instead, Luffy looked over to Darkess. "Will you join my crew?" he asked. Darkess moved excitedly as she rushed up the ramp and onto the deck of the Sunny. "Now what will you do?" Luffy had Rain pinned with his stare.

Rain let out a sigh. "Even if Darkess wants to join your crew I have no compelling evidence to support that this is the right decision. I could just catch a lift back with Grandma and Cloud Jumper."

Luffy's jaw set in determination. "Alright then," he finally said. Rain closed her eyes, thinking that he had finally given in. She felt him remove his hand from her shoulder. The sense of loss hit her hard.

It didn't last long, however. Before Rain knew what happened she was over Luffy's shoulder and he was walking up the ramp to the ship. Her eyes snapped open in shock at the abruptness of it.

"Alright Luffy," Sanji cheered. He definately approved of his captain's actions.

"Nice to have you as a part of the crew," Robin told Rain as Luffy passed them.

"This is considered kidnapping," Rain said.

"Not if it's truly what you want," Valka answered the accusation. "You really don't want to leave the Straw Hats. If you did then you could have easily left once Dragon joined up with Kagome. You would have finished your mission then. You chose to stay because you didn't want to leave. Right now your head is making the wrong decision. Give it some time and you'll realize that this is the right path."

Valka, Souta and Akita mounted the two dragons. "I'll let your father and brother know of your decision," Valka said. "I'm sure you'll receive a letter from them in short order." She lifted her arm and Swift flew to her. "I'll be taking this little guy so that you can get that letter in as little time as possible. Take care of yourself and your new friends." The two dragons then lifted into the air and started flying towards New Berk.

Luffy set Rain down on her own feet in front of him. He was grinning at her now. "Welcome to the Straw Hat crew," he announced.

Zoro put a hand on Bortolomeo's shoulder. "That goes for you as well," he announced. Bortolomeo was so happy that he had tears running down his face.

~ In an immaculate office a tanned man in a burgundy suit sat at his desk. He was glowering at a set of wanted posters posted on his wall. The most prominent were those of the Straw Hat Crew, Heart Pirates, Monkey D. Dragon and his wife Kagome.

A gentle rap at his door drew his attention. "Enter," he called out.

Admiral Fujitora walked in slowly, using his cane to insure there were no obstacles. He walked to the front of the desk and stopped.

Akainu waited for him to start speaking.

"The mission to Dressrosa failed," Fujitora announced. "The arrival of strong allies for the Straw Hats kept us from capturing them."

"Explain."

"The first of their allies to arrive were members of the Revolutionary Army. The one leading them was Sabo, second in command of the Revolutionaries. He also claimed that Straw Hat was his younger brother."

"Not by blood," Akainu growled. "Continue."

"We were evenly matched for a time," Fujitora went on. "However, the arrival of another ally was most unexpected. Not only were they capable fighters, but one seemed able to cancel my devil fruit powers over gravity."

"What?"

"She released some sort of power and I was no longer able to control gravity."

"Who was it?"

"A woman who rode on a dragon. She called herself Monkey-Higarashi Kagome."

Earlier in the story a weather proverb is mentioned. The real saying goes, "Red sun at night, sailors delight. Red sun at morning, sailors warning." I changed the word sailors to ships cause it fit better in the story. Nami's explanation is correct as well. The sun's light reflects off of dust particles in the air, causing a red glow from the light spectrum. Red being the longest it's the most prominent. The other colors are broken and not noticeable. Further details can be found at the Library of Congress website under Everyday Mysteries. It was a question that was asked and they gave a detailed answer.

11. An Enemy Like Naraku

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A Family of Outlaws

Chapter Ten: An Enemy Like Naraku

Rain looked from one Straw Hat pirate to the next. They were all giving her various signs of their approval. They either had huge grins, thumbs up, soft smiles, a smirk, cheering and dancing or had wrapped around her legs.

Rain looked down to where Chopper had reattached himself. "I'm so glad that you're staying," he said. He had tears in his eyes still.

"I was so afraid that you would leave us."

Rain sighed and smiled at everyone. She then got down low enough to look Chopper in the eye. "You're captain gave a very compelling argument," she said.

Chopper looked confused for a minute. "All he did was tell you that he decided you were a part of the crew."

"Exactly."

Realization dawned on Chopper's face and he started laughing. It was a silly reason, but it always seemed to work for Luffy. It was hard to debate with someone so set to get his way. Chopper was reminded of the time he had tried to change Luffy's mind and he was told to 'shut-up'. His and Rain's experiences weren't so different.

"Where are you going Leader?" Sabo's voice came from the dock.

The Straw Hats looked to see Dragon and Kagome boarding the Thousand Sunny. "I need a vacation," Dragon replied. "I think the best way to do that is to spend some time with my wife, son and his friends."

"But the Army is getting ready to launch into a full scale war against the World Government," Sabo said. "You can't just leave us right at this crucial moment."

"You're more than capable of handling things while I'm gone," Dragon said. "You wouldn't want to take this opportunity away from me, would you?" Dragon glanced over his shoulder and stared at Sabo.

Sabo closed his eyes and shook his head. A smirk was on his face when he looked up. "You and Luffy have completely different personalities," he pointed out. "But the two of you are both as stubborn and unmovable as a Sea King Turtle." He then tossed a rolled up parchment to Dragon. "You should see that before you go. That was in yesterday's paper. Having knowledge and being prepared are the best tools in a war."

Dragon opened the paper and looked at its contents. A smirk formed on his face. He pulled Kagome closer and kissed her on the temple. "You're debut caused quite a stir," he chuckled.

Kagome looked over at the paper he was reading. It was a wanted poster with her picture on it. She snatched it out of Dragon's grasp. "'For the Crime of Marrying an Outlaw and Giving Birth to One'! What kind of messed up excuse is that?"

Luffy stretched his neck from where he was and looked over Kagome's shoulder. "Ten Million Beri Bounty," he announced.

"All that just for having a family," Sanji tiskied. "What will the Marines think of next?"

"They want to give me a bounty?" Kagome growled. "I will give them a reason to put a bounty on me." At her tone everyone took a step back.

"Now that's what I like to hear," Dragon said. He pulled Kagome

closer for a kiss.

"GET A ROOM!" Rain shouted out. She bolted when Kagome shot her a look.

Luffy was smiling when he gave the order to set sail. "Finally," Law muttered. He gave a nod to Penguin as the signal to follow the Sunny.

~ After a few hours spent at sea Kagome approached an area of the ship where she could talk to both Luffy and Law. "Where are we going next?" she asked.

"We're going to take out Blackbeard," Luffy announced.

"Hey! Straw Hatter! That was not what the plan was," Law argued. "We're going after Kaido."

"We can't do that now," Luffy argued back. "Sabo is in danger. Blackbeard is after the one with the Flare-Flare fruit powers. He sent one of his crew to the Collesium to try and win it. He wants the power that Ace had for his own."

"I thought Sabo ate the fruit," Kagome said. "That means that the only way anyone can get a hold of it again will be if he dies."

"Exactly," Luffy pointed out. "Blackbeard killed Whitebeard. Right after he died Blackbeard did something. He hid himself under a black cloak so I couldn't see what, but he managed to gain Whitebeard's power. He now has the devil fruit powers of darkness and of Tremors. Who knows how many more he's absorbed in two years."

"Absorbed?" Kagome's face started to go white.

"Is something wrong Mom?" Luffy asked.

"It's just that I've seen something like this before," she said. "Law, I think you and another member of your crew should board Sunny. I'm calling a meeting that you might want to hear." Knowing better than to argue, Law nodded and motioned for Bepo to follow him to the other ship.

Every member of the Straw Hats, Dragon, Law, Bepo and Kagome were in the lounge of the Sunny. Kagome was pacing back and forth. "I need to hear more about this Blackbeard character," she said.

"He's one of the Four Pirate Emperors now," Dragon said. "Ever since he killed Whitebeard he's been on a single-minded mission of recruiting devil fruit users, by persuasion or other means. If he can't get them to join then he kills them."

"You know that for a fact?" Kagome asked.

Dragon shook his head sadly. "It's only speculation," he admitted. "Devil fruit users that confront him either work under him now or they vanish without a trace. He killed Whitebeard just before he stole his power. It's a safe assumption that the missing people have been killed."

"This is not good," Kagome muttered. She kept up her pacing.

Rain had enough, she stood up and got in Kagome's way when she turned around again. "You've told me the story often enough," she said. "Would you like me to tell it or would you like to brace yourself and tell the story on your own?"

Kagome took a deep breath in an attempt to calm down. "I'll be able to handle it," she finally said. As she steadied herself, Kagome turned to the others. This time she looked everyone in the eye. "Not many of you know about my past," she started.

"I was born in a world vastly different from this one. The main source of transportation was not by ship, but by a land vessel called an automobile. Almost all of the lands are big enough that automobiles are a neccessary way of life. The cities are huge with buildings reaching up to the clouds." Several murmurs of disbelief was heard.

Kagome ignored the whispers and continued. "When I was fifteen I was attack by a demon." Zoro looked like he was going to speak, but Kagome beat him. "No Zoro, I do not mean a human that behaved like a demon. I mean an actual, living demon. Her name was tue to her form, Mistress Centipede. She had the torso and face of a human woman. Below she had the legs and length of a centipede, if they grew fifty feet long. At any rate, Mistress Centipede attacked me. She said something about a jewel and pulled me into an old well on my family's shrine. It was called 'The Bone Eaters Well'. That was because people would throw the bones of demons inside and they would disappear.

"As I was falling into the well it started to glow blue around the demon and I. She still had a hold of me, so I reached my hand out to try and block her from my person. That was the first time I ever used reiki. The blast not only knocked her away from me, but also ripped her arm off.

"When I landed, softly I might add, I was in a different time. I was still in the same place, just five hundred years or so in the past. There I met with the villagers and they took me in. While I was talking with their priestess the demon attacked again, looking for me.

"In an effort to save the people I ran for the woods. There was a strange glow coming off of the trees so I figured it would help. I found out later by Kaede, the priestess, that no one else could see the light. At any rate, I ran to a familiar place. The God Tree is the center of my families shrine. Even going back five hundred years, the God Tree is ancient.

"Pinned to the tree was a man with silver hair and dog ears on the top of his head. When I passed through there on the way to the village he looked sound asleep. Now, however, he was fully awake. He started taunting me, calling me Kikyo and telling me to kill the demon like I had done to him. The thing is, I had never seen him a day in my life.

"As he and I were going back and forth the demon grabbed a hold of me. She used her moutht to dig into my side. She let me go by tossing me into the air. A pink jewel came out of the side she bit.

"The demon then pinned me to the tree, right next to Inuyasha. He continued to rant at me about taking out the demon. I asked him if he could back up his words. Could he defeat the demon that was attacking? He didn't say anything, but I decided to trust him anyway.

"I removed the arrow from the man's chest and he destroyed the centipede in short order. After a brief battle, I gathered the jewel from the insides of that hideous demon.

"It was then that Inuyasha demanded the jewel. Kaede told me to run, so I did. Inuyasha tried to kill me every step of the way.

"After a brief attempt on his part to kill me, Kaede put beads on him. They were the subjugation beads. She told me to speak the word of subjugation. I didn't have much time to think, Kaede just said the word didn't matter as long as I believed in it the first time.

"With Inuyasha's dog ears the only thing that I could come up with was 'sit boy'." That statement got a round of chuckles.

"Inuyasha was allowed into the village because of the necklace. He was always hanging around Kaede and I. As Kaede was preparing a stew it was revealed that Inuyasha was a half-demon. We fought a lot during those days, verbally. In all the confusion and fuss the jewel was stolen by a crow demon.

"I eventually managed to shoot down the bird, but I shattered the jewel in the process. That's when Inuyasha and I started to work together to gather the shards of the Shikon Jewel. A small sliver alone could greatly amplify the holder's power, so we weren't the only ones on the hunt for it. We later came to meet a kitsune demon named Shippo. Joining us soon after was a perverted monk named Miroku, a dragon slayer named Sango and her demon partner Kirara.

"Then we learned who the true enemy was. Another half-demon called Naraku. He was after the shards of the jewel as well. His malice turned the shards that he touched completely black and evil where as I was able to purify it.

"One of Naraku's favorite things to do was to attack and absorb the powers of strong demons. It would let him take on their powers as well. The more demons he absorbed the stronger he became. It took all of us, plus a few allies along the way, several years to just track him down. The battle against him seemed to last just as long as it took to find him. We eventually managed to defeat him and I was sent back to my own time. A few years of living there I was approached and sent to this world. My mother and brother decided to come along. My grandfather chose to stay behind, saying he was too old for such adventures."

"It took years to defeat one man?" Robin asked.

Kagome nodded her head solemnly. "Naraku had the mark of a spider on his back. He would also use spiders quite frequently before he became strong enough to spawn high level demons out of all the powers he stole. Then he sent them off to dangerous missions. This led all of us to believe that he was a spider hanyou. That and the fact that he liked to weave an intricate web of traps and lies. His cunning kept

him hidden from us."

"What does that have to do with Blackbeard?" Zoro asked.

"It's simple Moss-head," Sanji snapped. "Lady Kagome is trying to tell us that chasing down Blackbeard is a bad idea. Especially since we have four devil fruit eaters with us."

"It'll be fine," Luffy announced. "As long as Mom is here then she can cancel what ever powers that Blackbeard throws at us."

"I won't be around all the time," Kagome said. "I do want to be next to your father. He will want to return to his quest once his vacation is over." Luffy got disappointed at that.

"That's a good point," Usopp spoke up. "We can't hope to fight Blackbeard when your Mom isn't here. You might as well give up."

"Which brings us to the real reason that Kagome and I are here," Dragon announced. "A few days ago Kagome had Luffy in meditation. She was feeling out for something very special. Because Kagome's power is passed down from one generation to the next she was looking for Reiki, it's where she gets her power."

"I found a trace of it," Kagome smiled. "It's small right now, mostly because Luffy doesn't know it's there and he hasn't been nurturing it."

"Hold on a second," Sanji spoke. He was slouched and leaning over his lap. A cigarette was in his mouth. One hand braced him above his lap while the other was raised in the air with the palm facing outward. "Are you telling us that Luffy is a monk?"

"I suppose you could put it like that," Kagome said.

"Hear that Luffy?" Sanji smirked. "You have to remain pious and become a pacifist."

"I refuse," Luffy deadpanned. The Straw Hats all sweat dropped.

Kagome started laughing at them. "I don't think you remember what I said of my traveling companions," she managed. "Miroku was also a monk. He was one of the biggest perverts you'll ever meet. Worse than Sanji, in fact. He would walk up to women, complete strangers, and ask them to bare his children."

Sanji took out a piece of paper and wrote down on it. "This does not mean you can copy him." Kagome was glaring at Sanji.

Sanji shrugged and put away his writing utensils. "As I was saying," Kagome growled. "Since Luffy does have reiki it would be in all of your best interests if he learned how to use it. I won't always be around for every battle against a devil fruit user. If Luffy can learn to control his Reiki then no one with devil fruit powers can hurt him, unless they make the first move."

"So Luffy will become even more freakishly strong?" Usopp asked.

"That's just great," sarcasm dripped from his voice. "As if he didn't

have enough power to share with the rest of us."

"So you're saying once Luffy is trained we can't leave him if it looks like there's a chance of a devil fruit user attacking?" Nami asked.

"That's not what I'm saying at all," Kagome said. She took the small bag Dragon offered to her. "These are pendants that I had been blessing for the last few days. They hold a good number of reiki in them. If you should come across a devil fruit user then these will protect you from their powers."

"Will it effect us?" Robin asked.

Kagome shook her head as she handed Robin a purple pendant. "I was able to make it so that the reiki would not react to anyone with friendly intentions." She turned to give a few to Law. "I made a few for you and your crew as well."

"We'll pass," Law said. "It's never been in our policy to hide from devil fruit users."

Kagome shrugged, not phased by Law's attitude. "If you change your mind you know where to find me."

"Now we can go after Blackbeard," Luffy declared.

Law had a sour look on his face. "You're right Luffy," Dragon stood. "You should take out the most dangerous Pirate Emperor first. So, what's going to be our heading?" Luffy's cheerful face melted into a serious one as he gave it some thought. "There's my point," Dragon said. "How can you hope to fight your enemy if you don't even know where to find him? Go along with Law's plan for now. If you should come across Blackbeard then deal with him then. It would help no one if all of you became lost in New World without achieving any of your goals."

"But I want to go now," Luffy whined.

"Careful there mister," Kagome said. "Whining doesn't help you and it only makes those around you irritated."

"This is horrible," Luffy groaned. "I can't do what I want or you'll ground me again." The group broke out into laughter.

12. Origins of the Straw Hat

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****A Family of Outlaws****

Chapter Eleven: Origins of the Straw Hat

After the explanations, everyone went to do their own project or hobby. Things were crowded with a ship full of pirates and two full-grown dragons, one the size of a small house. Kagome took Luffy

with her to begin his training. Once she was settled down and not able to react quickly, he was gone. Not even the threat of grounding him got Luffy to hold still. Dragon was the one to come up with a solution to that problem. He had noticed his son's growing interest in the young dragon rider. He put that knowledge to use.

Dragon took Luffy off to the side. "I want to do a little exercise with you," Dragon announced. "It's using your imagination." Dragon turned Luffy to where he was facing the rest of the Straw Hat crew. "You care for your friends," Dragon stated. "You would do anything for them, that much is obvious. So much, in fact, that your enemies also know how important they are to you. Now, imagine that all of you are facing Blackbeard. The Heart Pirates aren't around and your mother and I are gone. You have only each other to rely on.

"Over the years Blackbeard has built his strength. No one has any idea how strong he has become at this point. Even with you being able to use Haki the battle could prove to be harsh."

Dragon then adjusted Luffy's shoulders to where his focus could only zero in on Rain. "Now I want you to use your imagination. Blackbeard knows how much you care for Rain, more than the others. He captures her, maybe not easily, but he still has her. An army of Devil Fruit users stand between you and her now. Instead of staying, Blackbeard retreats with Rain. You still have an army to go through to get to her. Can you do it with Devil Fruit powers and Haki alone? What would happen to that situation if you had the use of reiki? Not only could you charge through the army, but beating Blackbeard and saving Rain would be a snap."

Luffy remained quiet for a time. He hadn't thought about it quite like that. Silently, Luffy started to walk away and Dragon let him. A few minutes later Luffy and Kagome were found meditating in the garden. This time none of Usopp, Chopper and Bortolomeo's antics caused him to break concentration.

"How did you do it?" Zoro walked up to Dragon. "I know Kagome has tried to get him to meditate for days now."

Dragon smirked and looked at the swordsman. "A man just needs the right incentive," he answered.

"What kind of incentive?" Zoro asks.

"You'll see."

~ Four days passed uneventfully. Luffy continued his training with Kagome. He managed to summon a small amount of his reiki now. The Straw Hats still went about their daily business without a care.

Zoro was in the watch tower, using his weights as usual, when something caught his eye. He stopped to get a better look. A ship was approaching the Sunny and they were flying the 'peace flag'. Whoever it was they were obviously not Marines and they were looking for them specifically.

"There's a ship approaching," Zoro announced on the speaker. "They're flying a 'peace flag'."

Both groups of pirates looked for the ship Zoro was talking about. They found it off their port side. Dragon had a set of binoculars he was using. "I can't make out who it is," he said. "The only thing I can tell for sure is that they have peaceful intentions. Though their flag is lowered the image on the main sail is a skull with two red lines over its left eye."

Luffy's face suddenly appeared in Dragon's view. "Let me see," he cried. Dragon leaned back and lowered the binoculars. Before he could protest, however, Luffy snatched the optical device away. "It's got to be Shanks," Luffy announced. "That's the image that he has on his Jolly Rodger."

"Your grandpa has a few choice words for him," Kagome stated.

Luffy lowered the binoculars and stuck out his lips in dissatisfaction. He looked back at his mom, who was smirking at him. "You're not going to yell at him, are you?" he asked.

Dragon let out a laugh as Kagome looked shocked. "Why would you think that I would yell at him?"

All the Straw Hats avoided looking at Kagome directly. "No reason," they chorused. This only made Dragon laugh harder. Kagome shook her head at all of them.

"I don't yell at everybody," Kagome defended. Shadow laughed at this. "Who asked you?"

"Should we send someone to make sure it's Shanks and not some imposter?" Rain asked. "Let's think about this for a moment. Luffy has a large bounty and his crew, all together, is a bounty that's hard to pass up. Not to mention the Leader of the Revolutionary Army is on board, though I doubt anyone knows that. To end a long list of reasons, the Heart Pirates are sailing with us. Who would pass up a chance to bring in all these big names with such huge bounties?"

"I'll go and check it out," Kagome announced. "I've seen Shanks' wanted poster so I know what he looks like. Shadow can approach close enough for me to get a good look without anyone noticing."

Dragon pulled Kagome to him and kissed her. "You be careful," he said. He then let Kagome go.

Once Kagome was secure in Shadow's saddle, the Changeling blended in with her surroundings. It looked like Kagome was floating in the air. With a giant flap of her wings and a jump, the dragon was in the air. The two flew high enough so that Kagome couldn't be seen from either ship.

~ Rockstar blinked from his view in the nest. "Captain, you're not going to believe this," he called. "I just saw a person float away from the Straw Hat's ship and then disappear."

All those on deck looked up at him. "How much have you had to drink today?" Beckman asked.

"I swear it's the truth," Rockstar retaliated. "Even if I was drunk I couldn't just make something like this up."

"This should be interesting," Shanks smirked. "Keep an eye on the ship. If something similar happens then let us know."

"You actually believe him?" Yasopp asked.

"This is Luffy we're talking about," Shanks said. "He isn't one to be underestimated."

"Over estimating him is just as bad," Lucky pointed out.

The crew waited anxiously for five minutes. "It happened again Captain," Rockstar announced. "Only this time the figure appeared out of thin air and lowered to the ship."

"Can you see what's going on aboard the ship?" Shanks asked.

"The figure appeared and disappeared behind their sail," Rockstar reported. "I can see figures around the rail and near the figurehead, but behind the sails are a mystery."

"Then we just have to wait," Shanks said.

~ Luffy was waiting for Kagome anxiously when she and Shadow returned. "Well?" he asked.

Kagome smiled down at Luffy. "It's Shanks," she told him. "He looks a little older than his poster, but you can't mistake that red hair and scar."

"Whoo Hoo!" Luffy leapt into the air. He then ran back to the figurehead. He stood on top of the lion and started waving his hands back and forth.

"If we're having guests then we should keep Darkess and Shadow below," Rain suggested. She then turned to face Franky. "Is there enough room?"

"If they don't mind staying in the soldier docking system area," Franky started. "Then there's more than enough." He opened the docking system and both dragons flew in from the Starboard side.

~ Shanks now stood at the prow of his ship. Rockstar gave the report of someone waving to them. "That's got to be Luffy," Beckman stated. "I don't know anyone else that has that much energy."

"It would seem that whoever it was Rockstar saw was coming to check us out," Shanks smirked. "It looks like Luffy has someone on his crew with a unique spying ability."

"That would come in handy," Lucky took a bite out of the turkey leg he had.

"It seems our friend as learned a few tricks while out at sea," Shanks stated.

~ It took a half hour for the Red Force to come alongside the Thousand Sunny. When the ramp was secured Luffy waited at the end. He was shifting from one foot to the other.

"How come he wasn't this excited when we told him we were his parents?" Kagome asked.

"Because you're scary," Zoro answered.

"Watch it mister!"

Shanks walked down the ramp at an easy pace. He was followed by Beckman, Lucky and Yasopp. Once they were on board the Sunny Shanks started laughing. He and Luffy clasped arms together in greeting, Luffy joining in on the laughter. Shanks glanced around and spotted Kagome. "You must be Luffy's Mom," he cheered. The red-haired pirate approached Kagome and gave her a hug.

"Um," Kagome started. "Yes, I am." She pulled away from Shanks and stood next to Dragon. "My name is Kagome and this is my husband Dragon. We're Luffy's parents."

Shanks then clasped arms with Dragon. "You are a very lucky man," he said. "I would kill to have such a fine lady at my side."

"Some have tried and failed," Dragon smirked. He put his arm around Kagome's shoulders.

"Shanks," Luffy called out. The other captain turned to Luffy in question. Very carefully, Luffy took off his Straw Hat. He started to hand it out to Shanks. The members of his crew started freaking out. No one was allowed to touch his hat, yet here he was just giving it away.

Shanks looked at the hat and then back to Luffy. He took hold of it and when Luffy lowered his hand Shanks put the hat on Luffy's head. "You keep it," Shanks said. "It suits you better than it does me. Besides, I have a feeling that destiny brought it to you."

Luffy looked confused by Shanks statement. "We made a promise," Luffy argued. "Once I became a pirate and made a name for myself I would give this hat back to you when we met again."

"We did make that promise," Shanks agreed. "But I never said I would take the hat back to keep. I'm passing it on to someone more fitted for it. This hat belonged to my captain when I started as a pirate. He entrusted it to me, saying it was meant for great things. Right after he disbanded his crew. I had a feeling he knew it would eventually reach his true successor."

"What are you talking about Shanks?" Luffy asked.

"That hat first belonged to a pirate captain named Gol D. Rodger," Shanks announced. The ship was so silent that you could hear a pin drop. "That's right, that's the hat of The King of the Pirates. It's only fitting that his successor wears it as well."

Luffy took off the hat and stared at it. He had no idea it had such a long history. The way Rayleigh looked at the hat when he said Shanks gave it to him now made sense. Rayleigh had remembered a time when he worked with a man who also wore this hat.

"Now that the business end of this trip is taken care of," Shanks looked around. "It's time to have a party!" The members on board the

Red Force all cheered and started bringing out barrels.

"I guess I should get started on cooking," Sanji let out a puff of smoke. "We can't have a party without food."

"Yohohohoho," Brook started to walk away. "I'll see about a suitable place for musicians. Any that know how to play an instrument are welcome to join me."

~ During the party Shanks had Luffy sit next to him so that they could catch up. Everything was going great, in Shanks opinion, until Luffy suddenly went silent. Shanks waved a hand in Luffy's face and got no response. He followed Luffy's line of sight.

Off on the other side of the Sunny, Rockstar was avidly talking to a blonde woman. She was smiling politely, but shaking her head. Behind Rockstar, the green haired man of Luffy's crew was being held back by Yasopp's son. "What in the world?" he muttered. Shanks glanced around and found Zoro and Sanji having a drinking contest.

"Do you two know what the deal with Luffy is?" Shanks asked.

Sanji and Zoro stopped long enough to assess the situation. "What's the name of the man Bortolomeo looks ready to kill?" Sanji asked.

"That would be one of my newer recruits. His name is Rockstar."

"Well, he's flirting with the wrong girl," Sanji shook his head. "He would be safer if he kept his nose in his drink."

"How so?"

"Luffy is protective of Rain," Zoro pointed out. So now Shanks had a name to go along with a face. "Because of this, Bortolomeo is also protective of her. Not for the same reasons though. Bortolomeo basically worships the ground Luffy walks. He also sees it as his duty to defend anything that might be Luffy's. In this case, it would be Luffy's girl. Though neither have come to admit it."

"Is that right?" Shanks' smirk turned evil as an idea formed in his head. "Well now, we just have to see about that." Shanks stood up and headed over to Rockstar and Rain. Sanji and Zoro continued to watch to see what events would unfold.

~ "I'm afraid that I'm not a very good dancer," Rain said. She was trying everything to get this guy to leave her alone. He just wasn't taking a hint. Short of having Darkess take a bite out of his shorts, she didn't think he would give up.

"You can't expect me to believe that."

Rockstar startled at the entrance of the newcomer. "Captain," he called out. "I was just asking Miss Rain to a dance."

"I gathered that," Shanks smiled. He held out his hand to Rain. "Even if you don't know how to dance it's still fun to try."

Rain bit the inside of her lip. She knew how to dance, she just

didn't want to with strangers. She glanced around, looking for an escape. Another member of the crew off to the side would have been good. She could lie and say they were gesturing her over. She started looking closely around for Robin or Nami. Even Chopper would do at this point. She would put those ridiculous chopsticks up her nose to get away from dancing.

As if sensing her shift, Shanks didn't wait for Rain to accept his offered hand. He took hold of one of Rain's and headed for the makeshift dance floor. Rain blushed to the sound of the Red Hair Pirates giving her and their captain catcalls.

Brook and the other musicians were playing a fast song, to Rain's relief. "I've never seen an outfit like yours before," Shanks commented. "Where did you have it made?"

"My father actually designed it," Rain said. "It holds a good number of secrets. As for who actually made it, I did."

"The leather feels softer than any other I've felt before."

"We harvested the molted skin of creatures native to our island," Rain explained. "I don't suppose you would believe me if I told you this was dragon leather?"

"I don't think anything any of Luffy's crew members did would surprise me nowadays," Shanks said. "I've been following Luffy in the papers since he received his first bounty." Shanks started to spin Rain around the floor, in time with the beat. This whole time he managed to keep a careful eye on Luffy. The other man had stood from his spot and was walking towards them.

Shanks smirked down at Rain. "By the way," he started. "I do apologize for this in advance."

"Apologize for what?" Rain asked.

As an answer, Shanks swung her around particularly fast. He let go of her hand at a convenient time. The momentum and spinning kept Rain from stopping herself. She felt herself crash head first into someone muscular. 'Oh please let it be someone from our crew,' she silently pleaded.

Rain slowly opened her eyes, which she hadn't realized she closed very tightly. She found herself nose to nose with Luffy. His arms were wrapped tightly around her waist. Once again there were catcalls, but this time there was also cheering.

"That, ladies and pirates," Shanks called out. "Is what I like to call 'The Dance and Crash'. By the way, you two are welcome."

13. Dragon Mistress

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****A Family of Outlaws****

Chapter Twelve: Dragon Mistress

The next morning, most of the pirates on board the three ships were suffering from hangovers. Rain woke at dawn to clawing underneath the women's cabin. She rolled and tapped on the floor three times. The clawing stopped and Rain got out of bed.

"Darkess is a little antsy?" Robin asked sleepily.

"Isn't she always?" Rain asked with a yawn. "I should have gone to bed sooner."

"With all that noise?" Nami asked. "I'm surprised they didn't wake the dead."

"No, Brook was already awake," Kagome joked. She was starting to get out of bed to take care of Shadow.

"I'll let Shadow out," Rain offered. "I know you were up late."

"So were you," Kagome argued.

"She wasn't off and alone with her husband," Robin teased. "I'm sure Rain was just being polite about it."

"Oh shut up."

Rain laughed as she finished the ties to her leather armor. She grabbed her helmet on the way out of the room. As she was heading below deck, Luffy came out of the men's cabin. "I wasn't expecting you up this early," Rain greeted.

"I heard Darkess clawing the floor," Luffy said. "I hope you realize Franky won't be happy if there's any damage."

"I sure he won't," Rain agreed. "I'm also sure that Darkess knows that. There's a way to make a scratching noise without leaving damage."

"Do you mind if I join the two of you this morning?" Luffy asked.

"Well, I'll be taking Shadow out as well." Rain seemed to think about it for a minute. "You can come along if you like. If you don't want to ride behind me then you can always ride Shadow. Although, I'm sure Darkess would love to see if she can get you to fall off." Luffy grinned at the challenge.

"Who are Shadow and Darkess?" The two on the deck of the Sunny looked up to the Red Force. Shanks was leaning on the rail, looking down at them. He had an ice pack to his head and a pale complexion. He was obviously suffering the side effects of drinking too much.

Rain smirked over to Luffy. "How about a little surprise for your captain friend?" she asked. "It's only fair we return the favor for last night. If you open the docking system I'll round them up." Luffy went to the helm while Rain went to the starboard side.

Rain stood on the rail just as Luffy started to open the docking

system. She then jumped without any warning to the others.

Inside the docking system, Darkess was waiting to be let out. She got excited when the door started opening. It was shocking for her to see Rain falling from the ship all of a sudden. She rushed forward and caught her rider in mid leap. With a push of her wings, the two of them were instantly above the ships. Shadow followed after the two of them.

Shanks raised an eyebrow when Rain jumped. It's not like it was dangerous in this area, but she wouldn't have done that if she ate a devil fruit. He nearly fell back in surprise when a black shape came from the side of the Sunny, circled the ships and came to land. A red dragon also came from the side of the ship. Instead of circling it simply landed on the deck of the Sunny.

"Captain Shanks," Rain called out. Shanks looked to her voice and found her sitting on the back of a short, black dragon. "I would like to introduce you to Shadow." Rain gestured towards the red dragon. "She's a Changeling and Kagome's partner." Rain then patted the head of the dragon she was on. "This is my partner, Darkess. She's also a Night Fury."

"You know, I only half believed you when you said that you were wearing dragon leather." Shanks was still too stunned to completely believe that he wasn't hallucinating. "I thought that you were trying to see how far I would believe you."

Luffy grinned as he walked up to Rain and Darkess. "It's great having them around," he said. "Mom and Shadow are best at hiding. Shadow can change the color of her scales to match her surroundings so you can't see her. If Mom is riding then it looks like she's floating."

"So that's who it was," Shanks mused. "I was wondering who Rockstar saw flying from your ship yesterday and how."

"Mom wanted to make sure that it was you and not someone trying to get close and attack," Luffy said. He climbed up to the saddle on Darkess, behind Rain. "Every morning Rain takes Darkess out for a flight. Shadow goes along and sometimes Mom joins them."

"I take it that you're going along with them?" Shanks asked.

"You bet," Luffy grinned. "I've wondered what they do when Shadow comes back to the ship."

"Well then, I hope you have fun. There's something that I want to talk to you about when you get back though."

"No problem Shanks," Luffy said. "We'll be back in a little while." The two dragons took to the air again. This time they flew away and were gradually gaining altitude as they went.

When Darkess took to the air, Luffy wrapped his arms around Rain's waist. Rain looked down to see his hands were locked together. "I'm starting to think that you like holding me," she teased.

"What if I do?" Luffy asked seriously.

Rain looked behind her to see that Luffy had a serious expression on

his face. "What are you trying to say Luffy?" Rain asked. She wanted a straight answer, all cards laid out on the table.

"I like you Rain," Luffy said. "I like being with you. What more do you want me to say?"

"Why?"

"I just do," Luffy shrugged. "I can't explain it, I just like to spend time with you."

Rain nodded as she turned back around to face forward. She would talk to the girls when they got back and get their opinion. Of course, they might sugar coat things to not hurt her feelings.

~ When the two got back from their flight Rain's face was bright red. Not only had Darkess tried to get Luffy to fall off, but his response was unorthodox. He could have just squeezed tighter, but that would have been the sensible answer. Luffy was anything but sensible when it came to some things. When Darkess got particularly daring Luffy stretched his arms and wrapped them around Rain like a rope.

"Welcome back you two," Shanks greeted. He was looking a little better, though he was still a bit green. "How was the flight?"

"It was awesome," Luffy announced. He was grinning from ear to ear. Rain looked off to the side, the blush growing darker. The things Luffy had said coming to the forefront of her mind.

"We should get the others of your crew and alliance," Shanks changed the subject. "What I have to say is big and everyone will want to hear it."

Once everyone had gathered on the deck of the Red Force Shanks started the meeting. "In the last week it has come to my attention that the Marines are building a factory to mass produce a certain product. This, itself, isn't the troubling part. The problem is that they plan to mass produce a product called S.M.I.L.E."

"How do you know this?" Law demanded.

"I have a spy network," Shanks shrugged. "All of the Yonko have some sort of spy network. How do you think we keep tabs on the other Yonko?"

"So you know where Blackbeard is?" Luffy asked.

"I do," Shanks nodded slowly. "But that's not what we're talking about. I'll tell you what Luffy, I have a mission for you and your crew. Whatever happens, no one can be allowed to make S.M.I.L.E. It's unnatural and dangerous. That formula needs to be destroyed. If you and your crew get a hold of the formula, bring it back and destroy it in front of everyone I'll tell you where you can find Blackbeard."

"How do we know it's the real formula?" Law asked. He was always skeptical, with good reason.

"It's the amount of security they have that tips us off," Shanks

answered. "The town it's in is naturally surrounded by high cliffs. The only way in or out of the town is through the sea port. As you can imagine, that's guarded thoroughly. The only way a bunch of pirates like us could enter would be if we scaled the cliffs, snuck aboard a marine vessel or flew."

"That still doesn't guarantee the authenticity of the formula," Law argued. "How can you be so sure that this is real?"

Shanks had a look on his face that showed he was just humoring Law by answering him. "If you must know, my spy works directly under Doctor VanderPunk. They managed to get their hands on one of Ceasar Clown's S.M.I.L.E fruit and reversed engineered it. Now they have the formula and can start production. Plus side for us is that they destroyed the one sample they had in the process. The down side is that there's always a chance they could get another sample."

"So what's to stop them when that happens?" Law pressed.

"I'm hoping a little leaked information will help in that area," Shanks said. "Once the formula is stolen, my spy will start spreading the rumor that the formula was created by a still living Ceasar Clown. This also means that we must show proof that he's still alive."

"I can take care of that," Dragon stated. "I'll do that when I return to the Revolutionary Island. We have the tools we need to make our transponder snails heard around the world. We've been waiting to make our war announcement. We'll just include that little tid bit about Ceasar, along with his voice."

"You've clearly thought this out," Law stated.

"I had to," Shanks spoke solemnly. "Most people will take advantage of something profitable like this. Myself, I could care less about it. I know that Luffy shares my sentiment. I had to have a strategy in mind before coming to Luffy with my plan. I knew that it would be questioned, if not by Luffy's crew then certainly by his new ally."

"I would have helped you anyway," Luffy stated.

~ The three ships sailed to the village of Holmstead, where the factory was being constructed. Just as Shanks had said, the only legal way in was through the port and a Marine checking post. The three ships sailed to the other side of the island, using Nami's fog tempo to disguise their passing the port.

Once anchored Rain and Kagome mounted their respective dragons. Before Rain and Darkess took the air Robin stopped them. "Take this with you," she said. "If you have the opportunity to go into the town you should look as inconspicuous as possible. There's a dress, shoes and some hair ribbons for you."

"Thank you Robin," Rain said. "If I have the opportunity then I will certainly use them."

"Don't forget this," Shanks came up. He gave Rain a change purse full of coins. "There's enough beris in there to buy a fancy dinner with wine for the both of you." The two dragons then flew to the top of

the cliffs.

"Neither will be able to enter the town until they have the cover of darkness," Beckman pointed out. "A black dragon in the middle of the day is bound to be noticed. As is a woman just floating on air."

"It never hurts to be ready," Robin stated.

~ Darkess landed next to Shadow on the edge of the cliff overlooking the town. Rain pulled out her binoculars and looked down. "This place is locked down tighter than Gobber's braided beard."

"Now there's a thought," Kagome laughed.

"I don't see any way to bring in the others without drawing attention," Rain reported. "All the entrances and exits to the port have guards. The cliff side has a constant patrol. Each team of guards is within view of the other."

"Perhaps they had other pirate raids on the town," Kagome suggested. "A bunch of ropes being lowered from the cliffs would be the easiest way for a group of pirates to gain access."

"There's one way for us to gain access that they're not ready for," Rain said. As she spoke she put away her binoculars and got off of Darkess.

"Darkess would be noticed flying in," Kagome pointed out. "The flap of wings would be a tip-off as well, so Shadow and I can't go in."

"Use your imagination a little," Rain smiled. "I'm not planning on using Darkess or Shadow to gain access in." As Rain removed one of the saddlebags off of Darkess she spoke to her, "I want you to meet me on the roof of that building around midnight." Rain pointed to the second tallest building in the town. The tallest being the Marine Base. She took the bag Robin had given her off and stuffed it into the saddlebag. She then secured it around her shoulders.

"How do you intend to get in?" Kagome asked. "We don't have any rope, so that only leaves the dragons."

"My armor was designed by my father, Kagome." Rain looked up to the older woman. "It's not without its fair share of surprises."

"What are you talking about?"

"You'll see," Rain said as she turned from the town. She walked to the other side of the cliff and looked down to see the pirate ships below. "Tell everyone not to worry and that I'll be back." Before Kagome could question her, Rain turned around and started running towards the town's cliff. Kagome almost let out a shout of surprise when Rain jumped.

Kagome began to urge the dragons to rescue the apparently suicidal woman when Rain curled into a ball, her hands by her ankles. The loops that were always on the boots slipped over her wrists. Kagome watched in fascination as Rain straightened her body. Thin flaps extended from her legs, connected to her arms by the straps Rain just put around them. The younger girl then glided down to the

town.

Kagome started worrying her lip when she noticed that Rain was still going too fast. She let out a breath when Rain grabbed a hold of a clothes line leading from a third story window. The line broke on one side, but it slowed Rain's descent enough for her to roll gently enough to avoid injuries other than bruising.

"That girl is going to give me a heart attack," Kagome complained. "I suppose we should go back and let everyone know what's going on." Kagome then paled as she thought about that statement. "On second thought, maybe it would be safer for everyone around if I just kept that to myself and stayed up here."

~ As the crew waited below, Dragon took Luffy into the lounge to have a talk. Once they were sure no one else was around, Dragon started. "I've noticed that you've gotten very close to Rain ever since I found you and your mother. What is it that you want to happen between the two of you?"

Luffy crossed his arms over his chest as he thought about it. "I'm not sure what it is that I want," he finally stated. "I just know that I want her around all the time."

Dragon nodded his head in understanding. Sometimes his son was too innocent for his own good. "Perhaps I can help you," he started. "You have a good friendship with Nami and Robin." Luffy nodded his head when Dragon paused in his statement. "What would you do if either of them decided that they wanted to leave the crew?"

"I wouldn't be happy about it," Luffy admitted. "I would try to talk them out of it. But if it's something that they really wanted then I would let them leave. I would make sure they know I'm happy about it."

"Now what about Rain?" Dragon continued. "What would you do if Rain wanted to return to her family on Berk? Would you let her go like you did with Nami and Robin?"

"Not a chance," Luffy raised his voice.

"Why not? What's the difference between Rain and the other two women on your crew?" Luffy was silent for a long while. "Do you see Rain as an indispensable part of the crew, more than anyone else? Or is it that you have feelings for Rain that go deeper than friendship? What do you want from Rain?"

"All the others have their own dreams that they want to fulfill," Luffy stated quietly. "Rain isn't here because she has an ultimate goal. I demanded that she join my crew. She might have tried to stop me, but in the end she came along because I asked her. She has no other reason to be here. If the others all managed to reach their dreams and left, I would be sad. We are friends after all. But I can't let Rain go. I... I think I..."

"It's okay Luffy," Dragon said. "If you can admit it to yourself that's great. Just make sure that you let her know how you feel before it's too late."

"Dad, what is it that I'm feeling?"

"You're in love with Rain," Dragon stated. "You want to be with her like your mother and I are together. You want her to be your best friend and for you to be her best friend."

"You mean that I want to marry her?" Luffy was in shock. He had two women already give him a marriage proposal. At the time, his dream to become The Pirate King was more important than being pinned down to one place.

As Luffy thought about it, the more it seemed to make sense. He never viewed Rain as someone who would be in the way of his dream. In fact, he couldn't help but to believe that she would help him in his goals. The thought of marrying Rain made Luffy get excited. He looked up to Dragon with hopeful eyes.

"Now you know," Dragon smirked. "Just make sure not to wait too long before telling her. That Rockstar fellow or one of Law's crew members might try to steal Rain out from under your nose."

"They can try."

~ Rain found an abandoned alleyway where she could put the dress on that Robin gave her. Being quick so she didn't get caught, Rain changed her clothes. The dress was a soft cornflower blue with shoes to match. The dress sleeves were short, but loose and flowing. A soft breeze would make them and the skirt flutter. The dress also had a scooping neckline, but didn't show any cleavage. The skirt went down to Rain's knees.

Rain undid her hair from the traditional braids all the women in Berk wear. Instead, she laced the matching ribbon that Robin had placed in the bag into a braid on either side of her face. She then pulled the two braids back and connected them with the extra ribbon. It gave her a sort of innocent appeal.

Rain then placed her leathers and saddle bag in a hiding spot. She used the bag Robin gave her as a makeshift purse. With a deep breath to steady herself, Rain left the alley.

It wasn't hard to find the marketplace. Rain was impressed by the amount of people milling about. As she walked down the street some of the merchants called out to her for attention. Some of them Rain stopped to look at their wares, others she didn't. She was a warrior of Berk and things that were too frilly had no place in her life. She did have to play the part of civilian woman though. Breaking from warrior protocol as much as she dared, Rain would browse the jewelry stands and some fabric being displayed.

All the while, Rain was steadily making her way towards the Marine base and the location of the factory construction site. She quickly came to the end of the marketplace. She walked down the streets in the area, checking out the best escape routes and dead ends. If she bumped into a Marine and they questioned her she tell them it was her first time in town and that she was lost. The directions they would give all lead back to the marketplace. This method gave Rain many routes to take back to the plaza in case her way was blocked.

Once she was satisfied with the best route to take, Rain entered a restaurant not far from the Marines. She asked for a table with a

view and showed them her change purse full of beris. On the roof they had a lovely garden with tables set up.

The hostess showed Rain to a table along the outer edge of the garden. It had a wonderful view of the port and the Marine Base right next to it. The waiter was quick to come over and ask Rain what she would like. Rain ordered a cup of coffee to start. The waiter rushed to fill the order. Rain glanced at the menu, though she was only there for surveillance she needed to keep the appearance of a patron.

Once the coffee was delivered the waiter asked if Rain was ready to order. She ordered a specialty salad and returned the menu to the waiter. The man once again rushed off to fill the order.

As Rain sipped her coffee she stared over at the Marine Base. To any onlooker, it looked like she was taking in the view of the port. Rain was actually noting the best entrances and exits of the base. She was also looking for high security areas.

Once her meal was finished, Rain decided to head to the park to wait for dark. It was only another hour or so away. Then she could begin the mission of stealing the formula.

` Kagome paced the cliff on the pirate side ledge. The two dragons watching her. "I can't just go back there," she ranted. "If I do Luffy is going to ask where Rain is and I'll have to tell him. When I do that, he'll immediately go charging into the town and then that will ruin Rain's chances of succeeding. If I stay up here then the others will just come up to investigate anyway and Luffy will still go charging off."

Kagome continued to pace like that for a few minutes when her shoulders slumped with a sigh. "I suppose that there's no getting around it," she mused. Kagome climbed into her saddle once again. "I just hope that Dragon will be able to help me calm our son down."

Off to the side, Darkess was laughing. "You keep on laughing," Kagome said. "What do you think Luffy will do when Rain gets back?" Darkess only started to laugh harder.

Kagome and Shadow started to fly down to the others. She watched what was going on aboard the Sunny. Luffy was running from one end to the other, staring at her and looking around. Once they landed Kagome got off of Shadow and approached Dragon.

Luffy cut her off, getting in her face. "Where's Rain?" he asked.

Dragon put his hand on Luffy's shoulder and pulled him back to stand next to him. Shanks moved to stand next to Luffy as well, sensing he would be needed. "Rain went into the town on her own," Kagome announced. "Darkess is waiting for her on top of the cliffs."

Luffy faced the cliffs and started to stretch out his arms. "Gum Gum..." Before he could finish, both Dragon and Shanks tackled him. "Let me go!" Luffy yelled. "I need to go help Rain!"

"We can't do that," Dragon said. "If you go charging in there you

could ruin Rain's chances of getting a hold of the formula." Luffy began to thrash around underneath the two of them.

Shanks started to use his Haki to help control Luffy, but it was still a fight. "Do you not trust Rain that much?" he asked. Luffy's actions eased a little, but he did not give up.

"Nami-ya," Law walked up. "Go and get those sea stone chains we used on Ceasar."

Nami hurriedly left to do as Law directed. Meanwhile, Sanji and Zoro were holding down Luffy's legs. Robin was using her ability to aid the four men.

Nami came running back with the chain. "Catch!" she called as she threw it. Shanks caught them and started wrapping them around Luffy in one move. Almost immediately Luffy lost his strength.

"He can still use his Haki," Dragon pointed out. "It will be limited but he'll still be able to fight. Let's tie him over here until Rain gets back." The men then carried Luffy to the main mast and tied him to it.

"You have to let me go," Luffy pleaded. "Rain has never faced the Marines before."

"Look at it this way," Kagome walked up. "Rain at least knows what to expect from them. All of you have told her enough stories of your adventures for her to have figured it out. The Marines, however, have never faced Rain. They don't know her fighting style or what tricks she has up her sleeve."

"Mom, I can't just sit here."

"What will happen to Rain if the Marines find out that she's with us? She'll have a bounty slapped on her so fast her head will spin. Then she'll be as stuck as the rest of us, unable to go into marine ports to gather information. Which is what she's doing now. She's in no danger, just information hunting. She set a time with Darkess to meet. I doubt she'll do anything to jeopardize that."

~ After the sun set, Rain was on the move once again. Back in her leathers and helmet, Rain made her way through the back streets towards the base. Once she was at a tall building close enough, she snuck inside. It was a restaurant and Rain had come in through the back. Staying along the wall, Rain made it through the wait staff lockers and stock room. She found stairs that were leading up.

On the roof, Rain was disappointed to see that this restaurant had not made it into a dining garden. That was short-lived when she noted that it being a bare roof meant no one was around to witness her stunt. The marine base was a few buildings away. The difficult part would be to make it to the roof since it was five stories tall and the restaurant was only four. Without Darkess to aid her in gaining altitude, there was no feasible way for her to make it to the roof.

Rain looked for anything that could help her. A light in the base showed that it had a window open on the third floor. That was possible for her to reach if she jumped with the gliders out already.

She waited for a half an hour before the light in the room went out. With a smirk, Rain jumped.

One thing Rain noticed about guards on the ground below, they never look up. When she was close to the open window, Rain curled into a ball and fell through. She landed on the floor hard and rolled. She was up on her feet in seconds and rushed out of the room. If someone were to come and investigate that noise she needed to either be somewhere else or find a really good hiding place. Rain voted for being elsewhere.

In the hall, Rain checked the room next to the one she had come in through. The door was unlocked and the light was off. Rain went in quietly, shutting the door behind her. She waited with bated breath to see if anyone would be coming. A few minutes later a single set of footsteps was heard. They walked into the room Rain came in through. It was pure torture for Rain as she waited for the person to leave once again.

As the marine left the room Rain could hear him mutter, "Must have been hearing things."

Only when Rain could no longer hear him did she move again. She tucked the extra leather back into their pockets. Once that was finished she peeked into the hall. Seeing no one, Rain quietly exited. She left the door open this time. She wanted to make a statement, someone had been there and they missed it.

Rain checked all the doors on that floor. All of them were unlocked so she didn't bother entering and going through the files. She found the stairs that led both up and down. Rain took her chances and went up to the fourth floor. The higher the floor the higher the importance, or so Rain figured.

The stairs end on the fourth floor. That confused Rain since she knew there were five floors. The hallway on the fourth floor was along an outer wall and had only one door. Rain figured that just reeked of secrets. She went to the door to find it locked.

Rain quickly pulled out the cylindrical device that she used to free Mansherry back in Dressrosa Palace. She also prepared a refill of Zippleback gas. Rain sprayed the lock with the gas she had in the cylinder. Once the cylinder was empty, she ignited it while leaning away from the ignition point.

The explosion caused Rain to wince. She had known it would be loud, which is why she prepared her next gas refill. She activated the refill so that it started to let gas out. She then rolled it towards the stairs. It would look like someone had released a powerful toxic gas on the floor.

Rain swung the broken door open. It looked like an ordinary office. Knowing people don't usually lock up ordinary, Rain decided this was the right place. She closed the door and knocked a bookcase in front of it, the gas would buy her time until the marines got masks. The bookcase would slow them down for a short time as well. Rain had that long to find what she was looking for.

When the bookcase fell alarms started blaring around the compound. Rain lit a lamp that was on the desk. They knew she was here so there

was no use working in the dark any longer. Rain rushed around and found only normal personnel files. Thinking back to the structure of the facility Rain directed her attention to the ceiling.

Most of the ceiling tiles looked normal. There was one that had a slight hole in the corner. Rain moved a chair directly under it and pulled the tile. The tile started to swing on a few hinges. A rope ladder was barely within reach. Rain jumped and grabbed the second to last support.

Rain hefted herself up the ladder a few steps. She then reached out to pull the ceiling tile up after her. The marines were already banging on the door. Once it was closed Rain went up the two last rope supports and pushed up against the ceiling.

As she predicted, Rain was now on the fifth floor. "I bet it's pretty secure to most people," Rain praised. "Then again, they never predicted that the daughter of a peace maker, inventor and dragon trainer would come looking."

The room was filled with filing cabinets and a few desks. Rain started sifting through all of them, but nothing seemed to scream 'S.M.I.L.E' formula. Most of them were blue prints for subs, weapons and a few buildings.

Running out of time, Rain started opening the desk drawers. On the last desk she finally came across something worth while. The bottom drawer opened to show a safe. Rain took her saddle bag off her shoulder and opened it. Sifting a few things around and opening a small pouch to the side, Rain pulled out a glass vial.

"I know I'm only supposed to use this for emergencies," she said. "I think that this qualifies. I hate harvesting Changeling venom." Rain poured the thick substance on the side of the safe and drawer. It wouldn't do if the acid ate through the document she was there to retrieve.

Rain waited with bated breath as she heard the marines break through the door below. Orders were issued to check every hiding place. The acid finally ate a hole big enough for Rain to safely put her hand inside. She took the stack of papers. There were several different formulas there. Not fully being able to read the language yet, Rain couldn't tell for certain which one was for S.M.I.L.E.

Shrugging, figuring they would figure it out later, Rain stuffed all the papers into her bag. She secured it to her shoulders once again. The only way out this time was through the locked windows. Rain shrugged and took the partially melted drawer and safe. The acid had stopped working at this point. Rain then threw it at the window.

The glass shattered and debris fell to the ground below. "The intruder is in VanderPunk's office," a marine announced.

"Too little, too late," Rain laughed. She heard a marine coming up through the floor.

"I've spotted him," the marine called.

"He is a she," Rain corrected. "And I'll thank you to remember that. See ya!" Rain then leapt out of the window. She didn't waste time

falling, needing the extra height for distance in her escape. The glider flaps opened when Rain thrust her hands in the loops and spread them out again. She was instantly gliding over the marines below, shouting about the intruder escaping.

Rain decided not to stop on any buildings and waited to float down to the streets below. She would turn now and then to keep buildings between herself and the pursuing marines.

On the ground, Rain quickly put away the glider leather and then ran for the building she had told Darkess to meet her. It was getting close to midnight and a dragon rescue sounded like the perfect ending to her night.

Not unexpectedly, the marines were chasing her around the town. Rain was grateful she took the time to learn different routes of escape. She was in the back of the building she needed when the marines cornered her on either side of the street. With a shrug, Rain ran in through the back door. The marines being that close to her didn't bother her in the slightest.

Rain reached the roof and started whistling. It was a little before midnight, but if Darkess heard her call then she would come. The door to the roof opened and several marines poured out on the roof. One of them was wearing a captain's coat.

"You have nowhere to run," he stated. "It wasn't very wise of you to break into a marine base."

"That depends on your point of view," Rain pointed out. "I happen to think it was quite brilliant. The escape was even more so."

"But you didn't escape," the captain corrected. "We have you cornered and you have nowhere to go. How did you get in anyway?"

"I flew and for all you know I could fly away again."

"We would shoot you down."

"That's a good point," Rain nodded. "But you still don't have me cornered."

One of the marines just behind the captain was carrying a camera around his neck. His gun was trained right on Rain. "Who do you think you are?" the captain ranted.

"You can just call me the Dragon Mistress," Rain teased. "I'm a new crew member of the Straw Hat Pirates, pleased to meet you." The flapping of wings caused her to smirk, unseen by the marines with her helmet on, and the marines to start looking around. "Next time you think you have someone cornered, maybe you should ask yourselves if that wasn't their plan right from the beginning. You fools chased me to the exact place I wanted." Rain raised up her arm as a few of the marines attention was drawn to her again. "Bye!"

Darkess swooped in and grabbed Rain's arm. She immediately started to climb back into the air. A flash of light caught Rain's attention. The marine with the camera had dropped his gun in exchange for his camera when it looked like she was going to get away.

Darkess flipped over, tossing Rain up. When she came back down Rain was in the saddle. "Let's show these guys how a Night Fury makes a distraction. Let's take out their ship at the port opening. That'll keep them from pursuit for a little while."

With a nod, Darkess twisted and started diving for the port. Her plasma blast was charging as they went. At the right moment, Darkess released her attack and hit the ship on the deck. Fires broke out all along the deck of the ship. "Nicely done," Rain praised. "Shall we return to the others?" Darkess laughed and nodded her head at the same time. "What was that for?"

~ When Luffy started hearing alarms from the town he renewed his struggles to break free. Of course he could only keep it up for so long. The chains were sapping all of his strength. "Let me go," Luffy ordered. "Rain definitely needs our help now."

"Let's just wait a bit," Kagome tried to appease. "If anything were to go wrong I'm sure Darkess would immediately disobey Rain and go to her rescue. For now we don't know anything."

"Actually, that's not entirely correct." Shanks walked up with a baby transponder snail. "Right now I have a connection with my man inside. He wants to know who we got to break into the base alone."

"It's amazing!" A man's voice came from the snail. "I have never seen anything like it. The person snuck into the building with no one noticing. The alarm didn't start until they had blown the lock on the executive office. This person also found the secret door to VanderPunk's office. I had thought you wouldn't be able to find it without a blueprint and I was preparing to set up a pickup, but this person is on a roll. Once the marines were inside the executive office it took the shattering of glass for them to realize where the intruder was. By then it was too late."

"The reporting marine said he saw the intruder and identified a woman, mostly because she took the time to correct him when he stated the intruder was male."

"Sounds like something she would do," Kagome muttered.

"Then she jumped out of the window. Those of us hearing the report thought that she would surely fall to her death."

"I thought that at first," Kagome nodded. "Like the time she jumped off a cliff. Oh wait, that was earlier today."

"On her way down she opened some sort of glider hidden in her clothes and just flew away from the base. After a long chase the marines now have her cornered on a roof, I'm sorry Shanks."

"Don't be sorry," Kagome cut in. "Just sit back and wait."

"Who are you?"

"Monkey-Higarashi Kagome."

"The 'Kagome'?"

"That would be me."

"You should leave as soon as you can. The marines know you can cancel devil fruit powers. VanderPunk has expressed an interest in bringing you to his lab so that he can study you."

"Over my dead body," Dragon growled.

"Hold on just a moment," the man said. "Another report is coming in." There was silence for a few seconds. "Can I ask you all something? Is she really flying on a dragon?"

Shanks let out a round of laughter. "You better believe it," he said. "I was shocked when I found out myself. So, what's going on now?"

"She announced herself as a Straw Hat Pirate..."

"Nooo!" Luffy yelled as his struggles increased. "They won't let her escape now."

"Has anyone seen her face?" Robin calmly asked.

"No, she's had a helmet that covers her whole face on."

"She's still safe Luffy," Robin said. "The marines don't have a face to go with a name."

"Actually, they don't even have a name." The spy spoke once again.

"Now that is interesting," Sanji cut in. "So what do they know?"

"The intruder claimed to be a Straw Hat Pirate, called herself the Dragon Mistress and was picked up by a dark flying object that is assumed to be a dragon."

"Rest assured my friend," Shanks grinned. "That is a genuine dragon she's with. She just happens to be black and able to hide in the dark."

"I have to go now," the spy said. "Your friend just attacked a marine vessel, blocking the port. They're not going to be able to mount a pursuit until they stop the fires and tow the ship out of the opening." Shanks started laughing hard at that.

"And that, ladies and gentlemen," Kagome started. "Is the fighting style of a dragon rider and their dragon. Two units working together in perfect sync to achieve a common goal. Hit hard, fast and with the most amount of confusion."

~ Rain and Darkess landed on the deck of the Sunny. The two of them were directly facing Luffy. Everyone started cheering when they arrived. "Did I miss something?" she asked. Rain took off her helmet and got down from her mount. No one answered, they just kept cheering her success and Luffy just stared at her.

Nami looked between the two and leaned towards Robin. "Do you think we should let Luffy loose or should we wait until the shock of everything wears off?"

"I don't think we have a say in it," Robin said. She pointed towards where Luffy was chained. Nami's attention returned to their captain. Shanks was next to him, still laughing from earlier. He undid the chains that kept Luffy from running off. Luffy surprised everyone when he just stood there and continued staring at Rain.

Rain reached into her saddlebag and pulled out the papers she had grabbed. "These are the formulas that I had enough time to grab," she said. "I didn't have time to check each one of them for the S.M.I.L.E one."

Kagome took the papers, knowing the real reason Rain had grabbed them all. The two didn't want everyone to know that Rain couldn't read the common language in this world. Kagome started to sift through the papers. The one on the bottom was the one they were looking for. "We've got it," she said. "Along with other potentially dangerous formulas. One for a stronger gun powder and others for a 'glue cannon'."

"I'll take those," Usopp stated. He took the formulas that Kagome pointed out. "As the sniper for the Straw Hats it's my job to come up with new and interesting ammo on our quest."

Kagome just smiled, humoring him. She could tell that he was just eager to have something new to tinker around with. Kagome showed the S.M.I.L.E formula to Law and Shanks. "That's what we we're after," Shanks smiled.

"Then it would be in our best interest to dispose of this," Kagome said. She then handed the formula over to Franky. "Would you care to do the honors?"

"It would be my SUPER pleasure," Franky agreed. "Franky Fireball!" He then spit fire from his mouth, instantly incinerating the formula.

"Glad that's over with," Rain said. "But we should set sail and get out of here. I bought us a little time, but I'm sure the marines will send out ships as soon as they're able, looking for the Sunny. I did kind of announce that it was the Straw Hats that dared to infiltrate the base."

"So we heard," Dragon stated. "Though next time I wish that you would just let them think what they want."

Rain shrugs as everyone starts to get the ships ready to sail. She goes over to Darkess and reattached her saddlebag. "Are you up for a battle if we need to?" Rain asked. Darkess gave off her purring sound and hunched her shoulders, showing that she was ready.

Rain smiled and turned around to help get the ships moving. She was stopped short by running her face into someone's chest. She blinks and notices the scar, it's obviously Luffy. Rain looks up as she prepares to step back from him.

Luffy's arms snapped into action before Rain could move away. His left arm went around her waist while his right hand went to the back of her head. Instead of being able to move away, Rain is pulled closer to Luffy. He lowers his head and kisses Rain for all he's

worth.

The crew is still busy getting ready to sail, it's a flurry of motion. Zoro is pulling up the anchor when he notices the two. "Oh, that kind of incentive," he muttered. The three ships then move away from the island just as the first marine ship rounds the cliffs. The pirates avoid a battle since they're lighter and move faster.

During all of this commotion, Luffy still holds Rain to him as he kisses her. Dragon and Kagome are off to the side, holding each other. "You have no idea how happy that makes me," Kagome said. "My son is with the one woman who I considered as close as a daughter. With the two of them together, she actually will be."

"You don't think her father will have something to say about this?" Dragon asked.

"I can manage Hiccup," Kagome stated. "It's Rock we should worry about. He's so protective of his little sister he would rather she become a nun."

"So he's someone Luffy should watch out for," Dragon mused. "What is he like?"

"Rock took after his grandfather, Hiccup's father." Kagome thought for a moment on how to put it. "Perhaps it's best if I just told you what his name was. The name of Hiccup's father was Stoic. Everyone called him 'Stoic the Vast'. That man was nearly unmovable in all of his views. In fact, it took a dragon the size of Berk to make him realize he wasn't the strongest out there. It was also the same time Hiccup convinced him that dragons and humans could be friends."

"So I take it Rock is just as unmovable in his views."

"You got it," Kagome agreed.

~ Luffy slowly pulled away from Rain. He didn't go far though, he leaned his forehead against her's. "Don't ever do that again," he said. "Do you have any idea how worried I was?"

"Enough that they tied you to the mast apparently."

"It's not funny Rain," Luffy said. "I was ready to go charging into town, marine base or not, and bring you back to the Sunny. From now on, if you have an idea like that don't act on it on your own. Return to the rest of us, tell us your idea and we'll all work out the best way to reach our goals."

"How many rules are you going to put on me?"

"As many as it takes for you to realize how much I love you and can't live without you."

"You love me?" Rain stiffened and started blinking in shock.

"I do," Luffy admitted.

Rain let out a sob and wrapped her arms around Luffy. Her cheek was now pressed against his chest. "I love you too," she managed. She could feel Luffy squeeze her a little tighter.

~ The next morning, Shanks joined the Straw Hat crew for breakfast. With him are Beckman, Yasopp and Lucky as usual. Beckman and Lucky are there to make sure their captain doesn't do anything reckless. Yasopp went to do a little father son bonding with Usopp before leaving. This morning there was a lot more chaos then usual.

"That's not how you kiss a woman Luffy," Sanji was chastising. "You're supposed to be gentle and approach them slowly. Make them feel like they're cherished. Don't act like it's something that needs to be done fast and gotten over with."

"I need to get to work and alter the blueprints for the Sunny," Franky was saying. "Then I need to start construction right away."

"Why is that?" Bortolomeo asked.

"Our captain will need his own private quarters now that he has a lady to spend some alone time with," Franky grinned.

Kagome walked behind Franky and smacked him upside the head. Rain was blushing so hard the girls thought she would turn into a tomato. Luffy was too busy eating to pay attention to what was being said.

Rain stood up from her spot. "I'm going to go and check on Darkess," she announced. She then rushed out of the room.

Luffy found his face smashed onto the table by Sanji stepping on the back of his head. "Don't just sit there and eat," he yelled. "Your woman is in distress. Get out there and comfort her."

Luffy stood up from his seat. "Rain is only upset because you and Franky wouldn't leave well enough alone," Nami snapped. She hit both men upside the head. "Next time don't say anything at all."

"Yes Nami-swan."

"SUPER."

~ Rain was next to Darkess on the deck. Sensing her unease, Darkess had wrapped her tail around the both of them.

"You shouldn't let them get to you." Rain turned to see Luffy walking up. "They just want to get a rise out of us. Most of the time I act like I can't hear them or don't understand what they're saying. They eventually drop the subject."

"I know they were just teasing," Rain said. "It's still not something that I'm used to." Darkess moved to let Luffy come up to Rain. When he was next to her she leaned her head on his shoulder. "I just wish that they wouldn't make such innuendos."

Luffy was about to say something when he noticed something in the sky coming in their direction. "What is that?" he asked.

Rain and Darkess looked to where he was pointing. Rain didn't have her binoculars, she was wearing trousers and a shirt, not her leathers. Darkess, however, seemed to see just fine. She unwrapped

herself from around the couple and started prancing.

"Whatever it is it's not a threat," Rain stated. As the spot grew larger Rain grinned. "In fact, it's someone we all know." In another moment Swift was in Rain's arms and snuggling up to her. He greeted Darkess with a round of chattering.

"He's got something tied to his leg," Luffy pointed out.

"It would be a letter," Rain stated. She looked down at Swift's leg. "In this case, it's a bunch of letters." Rain took the letters and set Swift down. He and Darkess immediately bounded off to go play.

"Who are they from?" Luffy asked.

"Three are for me," Rain mused. "One from my father, one from my brother and one from my grandmother. You have one as well."

"For me? Who's it from?"

"Your name is written in my grandmother's handwriting, so I assume it's from her." Rain handed the parchment to Luffy. She then sat down against the rail to read her own letters. The first one she wanted to read was from her father.

Rain,

I hope this letter finds you well. I'm sorry for the delay in Swift returning to you. We had to keep him from returning until we convinced Rock that he didn't need to go and rush to your rescue. He would have followed Swift if we let him leave. As it is, I'm afraid that your brother will still try something to bring you back to Berk. Your grandmother told us of your budding relationship with Kagome's son. If he's anything like his mother then I trust that you're in good hands. I also trust Kagome in her judgement. I'm certain that if she felt anything was wrong then she would stop the two of you from courting. I hope to hear back from you soon. I will soon be able to leave Berk for a visit. I look forward to meeting your suitor.

Your Father,

Hiccup

Rain smiled at the letter. Her father was always so formal on paper. She didn't mind if he came to meet Luffy and the rest of the Straw Hats. Rain then moved on to the letter from Valka.

Dearest Rain,

_I trust that you're keeping everyone on their toes? That's my girl. It's always more fun to keep them guessing. I hope by this time you've come to realize your feelings for that Pirate Captain of yours. If you haven't I might just have to come over there with Ruffnut and her two girls. We'll make sure the two of you get to know each other. Just a promise, not a threat. _

Love,

Grandma

Rain let out a sigh of relief. Her returning letter will make her grandmother happy. That and she wouldn't get Ruffnut and the girls involved. They would most likely set the ship on fire. With much trepidation, Rain opened the letter from her brother.

Sis,

Don't worry, I'll come up with a way to save you. If that Luffy character tries anything you know where to kick. As soon as I can break away from Dad and Grandma I'll come to you. As it is, I'm not able to do anything. As the new chief I have to stay here or appoint a temporary chief. I'll either send someone to save you or I'll come myself. Be brave, help will be there soon.

Your brother,

Rock

Rain shook her head as she read the letter. Her brother always did jump to conclusions and couldn't be persuaded otherwise. Now she had to watch both the sky and sea for an attack. That was just wonderful.

Luffy couldn't help but wonder what it was that Rain's grandmother would want to write to him about. He opened the letter to find out.

Luffy,

I hope that you're well. Tell you mother I say 'hi'. I just wanted to give you a word of encouragement. I know that you and my grand-daughter are interested in one another. I just wanted to let you know again that I'm routing for you. Don't let her slip the wool over your eyes. She's not used to men showing her attention, you can thank her brother, so she might duck and dodge any advance you make. If this letter finds the two of you already in a relationship, good job! I hope to have great-grandchildren soon, but not too soon. Do you understand? At any rate, your Uncle Souta and grandmother are helping me write this in your language. I hope you can understand what I'm writing because I can't read a word of it. By the way, your family is now laughing at me. Tell your parents that Souta and Akita, your grandmother, wish them well and hope to see them soon.

Vilka

~ Hiccup was helping to put the finishing touches on the fire extinguishing system around the village. He and Toothless were lowering one of the water ways to another villager below, ready to hammer it into place.

Once they were finished, Hiccup and Toothless started to head towards their house. "Hiccup, I need to talk to you."

Hiccup turned to see Eret walking quickly towards them. "Hey there Eret," Hiccup greeted. "What's the rush all about?"

"You told me to come get you if Rock ordered me to do a certain

something," Eret said.

Hiccup sighed and put a hand to his head. "Okay Eret, thanks for letting me know. You're not going to do it, are you?"

"Of course I'm not," Eret stated. "Everyone wants to see that girl happy. Valka says she's happy going on an adventure and I believe her."

"Even if that means she might find romance on that adventure?" Hiccup asked.

"Even then," Eret stated. "My son is a touch too young for your daughter anyway." Eret waved and then walked off.

Hiccup shook his head and changed directions for Rock's hut. He entered without knocking. "What brings you here Dad?" Rock greeted.

"Rock, you can't send the tracking unit to go and kidnap your sister."

14. Visitations

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****A Family of Outlaws****

Chapter Thirteen: Visiting

Luffy and Rain were still going over the letters when Shanks walked up to them. "We need to get going," he said. "It was great working with you and your crew, Straw Hat Luffy. You truly have made a name for yourself as a pirate." Shanks put his one hand on the top of Luffy's head. "I look forward to seeing you again." He then turned his attention to Rain. "It was a pleasure meeting you, 'Dragon Mistress'."

"Since when do you call her that?" Luffy asked.

"Since I read this morning's paper." Shanks held up a sheet of paper. "This just happened to be along for the ride."

Luffy read the spread on the paper when Shanks handed it to him. "Wanted: Dead or Alive. 'Dragon Mistress', real name unknown. Affiliated with the Straw Hat Pirates, 'Dragon Mistress' is wanted for the crime of trespassing on a Marine Base and stealing valuable Marine information. Bounty amount: Seventy-five million Beri."

"I have a wanted poster?" Rain asked.

"It gets even better," Shanks laughed. "You have a bounty under a false name and your face is completely covered. You could walk into that town now, without the helmet, and no one would be the wiser."

"That's a relief," Luffy sighed. "I don't want you to be as hunted as the rest of us are."

"It will happen eventually," Rain pointed out. "I'm a part of this crew now. Sooner or later a Marine is bound to see me with Darkess when I'm not wearing the helmet. I can't imagine they would hire someone too stupid to connect those dots."

"You never know," Shanks shrugged. "At any rate, this is a debate between you two love birds. I'll just be heading off now."

"Wait a second Shanks," Luffy called. "You promised me some information if we helped you."

"That I did," Shanks nodded. He closed his eyes and seemed to be deep in thought. "How about I tell you when everyone else is around. It does involve all of you. All the members of your crew need to hear this."

The three went back into the lounge. It was silent for a moment. Sanji opened his mouth to speak, but Shanks beat him to it. "My crew and I are getting ready to sail off," he said. "Before we do, I'll fulfill my end of the bargain. I think that all of you have a right to know what I'm about to say." He waited until he had everyone's attention. "Blackbeard has taken over Whitebeard's old territory. That's not all, he was also last seen in East Blue. He's been going around the islands and looking into the origins of the Straw Hats."

A dead silence filled the room. Hands slamming on a table startled everyone. Nami had stood, hunched over the table with her hair hiding her eyes. "Is that supposed to be a joke?" she asked. She turned tear filled eyes up to the front of the room. "If it is then it isn't very funny."

"I wouldn't joke about this," Shanks said. "Not about Blackbeard and what he's up to. I have as much dislike for him as the rest of you. I made a promise to Luffy to tell him what I knew of Blackbeard and his activities. I gave you the information, what you do with it is up to you. I wouldn't mourn the loss of Blackbeard if he were to suddenly go missing or something." Shanks turned and started to walk out. "Thanks for your help and hospitality," he said. "I hope that we will see each other again. Keep going up this path and it will be soon."

The Straw Hats all sat in silence for a moment. "We can't just sit here and do nothing," Nami finally declared. "We need to go and check up on our homes. The paddles on the docking system will get us there and back."

"How long will that take?" Robin pointed out. "That's just for starters. When we do get to East Blue, where should we sail to first? Where is Blackbeard now? If we run into him are we ready to face him?"

"Are you saying we leave our family and friends to suffer by him?" Usopp demanded.

"You have no way of knowing that," Robin continued. "All we were told was that he was gathering information. We have no way of confirming

or denying that he actually did any harm to your homes."

"There is a way to find out," Kagome said. "It's a far simpler solution than what the rest of you think it needs to be. Rain, come with me please. A letter from the sister of the chief will carry more weight than the letter of his nanny."

Kagome starts to walk out of the lounge. Before Rain leaves, she turns to Luffy. "You might want to discuss with Law a slight pause in the plans. A week, at the most, is all you'll need." She gave him a quick kiss on the cheek and hurried after Kagome.

Everyone in the room sat in silence. They all turned to look at Dragon for an explanation. "I don't know what they have planned," he said. "I'm as much in the dark as the rest of you. I never could figure out the way my wife thought."

Rain sat with Kagome in the women's cabin. "So what would you like me to send?" Rain asked. "A formal request to post Riders at their villages or should we ask for a few riders to come pick them up and take them to their villages so they can check on them personally?"

"I like the personal touch," Kagome smirked. "Now the question is how many should we call for?"

"I recommend no more than three," Rain said. "I know that Luffy, Nami, Sanji, Zoro and Usopp all came from East Blue. I could take Luffy and two riders could have one person each. If my grandmother comes then she could have two ride with her."

"You're not counting Shadow and I?"

"No offense on either of you, but I don't think you can handle another passenger. Seriously, who would want to ride on the same dragon as you and, well, Dragon. I saw the two of you last time. I nearly went blind."

"Okay, you've had your fun. Let's ask for three dragons and their riders. I'm sure that your grandmother will be one of them."

"Of that I have no doubt." Rain began to write her letter. She finished in a few minutes. "So I told Father the basic idea of the situation and that my new friends really want to check on their families and that they don't have a fast way to get there. It would be much faster if we could get the assistance of some riders. I do have another question though. Don't you think that Chopper and Franky will want to check on their home villages as well?"

"So far we've only received word that Blackbeard was checking on the villages in East Blue," Kagome said. "He might have already checked on those that came from the Grand Line before hand or it's his next stop."

"So we should check on them to make sure? Or do you honestly think we have time?"

"I think that if Shanks found out Blackbeard had been to Chopper and Franky's home he would have said something about it. I think it's a safe bet to say that they haven't been looked into yet."

"That's a relief," Rain let out a heavy breath.

"Let's get that request sent to your father right away," Kagome said. "The sooner we send Swift the sooner they will be here."

"I agree completely," Rain nodded. She went out to the deck and called for Swift. He came flying up to her, Darkess not too far behind. Rain quickly attached the letter to his leg. "It's important to get this to my Father Swift," she explained. "It's okay if you bring it to my grandmother, but you must absolutely not let Rock get a hold of it. He will most definitely take the request for help the wrong way. So avoid him at all costs." Swift gave a chirp of agreement and started to fly away.

"How long do you think before anyone gets here?" Kagome asked.

"Depends on how fast they can ditch Rock."

"Ah, minimum four days. Maximum, unknown."

"Exactly."

~ Law walked on to the deck of the Sunny. He spotted Rain and Kagome sending off the little dragon. He believed that its name was Swift. He continued on his way to find Luffy to discuss their next move. He found him and the other members of his crew in the lounge, some were in a panic and the others were trying to calm them. Luffy was off to the side, looking out a window. He had the appearance of being deep in thought.

"Straw Hatter," Law called out. He had the attention of Luffy and Zoro. "We need to talk about what our next move against Kaido will be."

"It will have to wait," Luffy said. "We're dealing with a big problem now."

Zoro walked up to the two captains. "It's not that big of a problem," he said. "If Kagome and Rain can manage to find a way to get you, Nami and Usopp to check on your friends and family then the rest of us can at least travel with Law towards our next goal. There will be enough of us on board to man the Sunny."

Luffy let out a humming noise. "Think about this Straw Hatter," Law cut in. "If you keep me waiting on our goal to take out the Yonko then you can consider our alliance over, you won't have an option this time. I will take my crew and we will leave you."

"It's the best option Luffy," Sanji came up. "Let those most worried about their family go and check. Meanwhile, those still aboard the Sunny will work with Law and his crew to reach our allied goal."

Luffy nodded his head in agreement. "It's the best option we have," he said.

"Except for one detail," Robin added. "You will have to take at least Zoro or Sanji with you. Even if neither of them wish to go, both

can't stay here without Nami. They would get into an argument and the Sunny could likely find itself on the bottom of the sea."

"That's a good point," Dragon smirked. "I've seen the two of them bicker. When they started getting physical the only one able to stop them was Nami when she hit both of them on the head."

"Curly brow can go," Zoro said. "I haven't been to my home village since long before I met Luffy. A little longer won't hurt me. Besides, I'm sure that they wouldn't appreciate me showing up since I'm a pirate now. Someone needs to be here with Luffy gone."

"I would make a better choice to stay in that case," Sanji snapped. "You would get them all lost in the first five minutes of being in charge."

"It will be fine Sanji," Robin said. "He will not be the one steering the ship. Even if he were, all he would have to do would be to follow Law and his crew. We'll all make sure that the Sunny remains safe and on course while the rest of you are away."

"We don't even know how many can go yet," Usopp put in. "Trying to decide which of the two of them are staying is pointless until then."

"I guess we just wait for Kagome and Rain to tell us what they were up to then," Dragon said.

The two women choose that moment to walk in. Kagome went right up to Dragon. Rain, however, stopped short when everyone was looking at her. "So I suppose you all want an explanation," she assumed. "We sent a letter to my father. We asked for three dragons and riders to come and take three or four of the crew to East Blue. How many will come, we're not sure."

"So that settles that debate," Nami declared. "Zoro will stay on the ship under the supervision of Robin and Chopper." When Zoro looked to complain, Nami shot him a glare. "Under supervision," she growled.

~ Two days later, on a cliff island in the East Blue. A man with graying brown hair was checking on some of the foundations for the dragon stables when he was plowed over by a Terrible Terror. Once he got his bearings, he lifted the dragon off of him. "I didn't expect to see you back so soon Swift," Hiccup said. The little dragon looked around, checking the area. Once he was satisfied, he offered his leg with the letter to Hiccup.

Hiccup raised a brow in confusion. Swift had never been so secretive before. As soon as Hiccup had the letter, Swift hid in some nearby bushes. Hiccup could only ponder the odd behavior as he opened the letter. He quickly read it and stuffed it in his shirt. It was no wonder that Swift was trying to hide his presence. Rain didn't want Rock to know she sent a letter and with good reason.

Hiccup quickly found his mother and Gobber. He told them the situation and what was asked. Gobber left to go get the third rider while Valka went to pack some supplies for the journey. Hiccup had the unpleasant task of coming up with a viable excuse for three riders going missing to his son. It seemed odd he had to answer to his own son, but since he was the chief now he did have a say in who

left the village. The only reason Rain was allowed to leave was because Hiccup still had some control back then.

Hiccup found Rock talking to some of the farmers and hearing them complain about the bugs destroying their crops. "I will see about getting some more Terrible Terrors for you," Rock was saying. "They should help you keep the infestation down to a manageable level."

The farmer thanked him and left the two men to discuss whatever it was that Hiccup needed. "Is there a problem Dad?" Rock asked.

"Not really a problem," Hiccup started. "Your grandmother and I have talked about going out and explore the surrounding islands. Get a feel for our surroundings and our neighbors. See who would be open to trade negotiations with us and who would only see as enemies. With the village secure, you don't need me here, breathing down your neck every time you turn around."

Rock thought about it for a moment. "It sounds like a good idea to me," he said. "How long do you think you'll be gone and who will be going?"

"Your grandmother and I will go, of course. I was also thinking of bringing Snotlout along. We'd be gone for a few days to a week. Maybe slightly longer."

"I don't think Snotlout is a good idea," Rock said. "I wouldn't peg him for the diplomatic type."

"He's not coming for diplomacy," Hiccup said. "That will be my job. Snotlout is coming for the firepower. If we get into a scrap that Toothless and Cloud Jumper can't out maneuver then it will be good to have a Monstrous Nightmare watching our backs."

"Why not take Souta?"

"You tell Ruffnut why her husband left her just before she gives birth."

"Point made," Rock held up a hand in surrender. "I don't want to walk down that path. Okay, I trust you to make sure Snotlout doesn't start a war. Keep in touch with a Terror every few days."

"As usual," Hiccup agreed as he walked away. He met up with Valka, Snotlout and Gobber in front of the main hall. "We can leave at any time," he said. "We have the all clear for the three of us to leave. Gobber, make sure that he doesn't try to send a tracker after Rain. He's still on that kick."

"I'll sit on him if I have to," Gobber declared. "Well, I will have Grump sit on him."

"Are we ready to go then?" Hiccup asked.

"I have all of our rations packed," Valka announced. "I'm not packing your clothes though."

Hiccup nodded as he headed for his hut. "I'll go and do that now. You two should get your dragons and I'll get Toothless as well. We'll

meet back here and then we'll be on our way."

"Where are we going?" Snotlout asked.

"Just be happy to know you get out of the village for a spell," Gobber said. "I'm sure that you'll be filled in on the mission before it starts."

"That doesn't tell me much," Snotlout muttered. He walked away to his own hut where Hook Fang was waiting for him.

Hiccup had changed into his flight armor and packed some spare clothing. He put his helmet on and walked out the door. It didn't take long for Toothless to spot him and coming bounding up, ready to go for a flight. The two went to the bushes where Hiccup left Swift. A quick glance showed that no one was watching. Hiccup scooped Swift from his place in the bush and shoved him inside of his pack. He then continued on his way to the main hall, Toothless following after.

"Is everyone ready?" Hiccup asked. He climbed on his dragon once everyone gave the affirmative. "Then let's go bud." Toothless was in the air with a mighty flap of his wings. Cloud Jumper and Hook Fang not far behind. The three dragons made their way North.

When the village was out of sight Hiccup reached into his pack and pulled out Swift. "What's Rain's Terrible Terror doing here?" Snotlout asked.

"We were asked for help," Hiccup stated. "I didn't want Rock jumping to the wrong conclusion, so I kept the mission and Swift hidden. Swift will lead us to Rain and we'll decide what to do from there."

"What is the mission?" Snotlout asked.

"We're going to help Rain's new friends," Valka answered. "They need a ride to check on their homes. The letter mentioned an enemy getting too close to their home villages."

"So we're not going to save Rain, but we're going to give a ride to a bunch of snot nosed kids?"

"You'll fit right in," Valka teased.

"I think it's a bit more complicated than that," Hiccup said. "There might even be the chance for a little fighting, you never know."

"Then what are we waiting for?" Snotlout urged Hook Fang forward again.

"Mention a fight and he gets riled up," Valka smiled.

"Hey Snotlout," Hiccup called out. "Swift is flying in the opposite direction. We have to follow him."

"I knew that," Snotlout covered. He and Hook Fang changed course and began to fly after Swift. Hiccup and Valka shared knowing looks and followed.

~ Luffy and Rain are hardly ever seen apart these days. The only time anyone sees them not together is at night, when it's time to sleep or when they're doing their personal business. The relationship has Kagome, Robin and Nami excited.

Sanji has also decided to play a hand in his captain's relationship. Every night, at sunset, he set out a candlelit dinner on the aft deck of Sunny. Brook is threatened into playing something romantic on the violin and not a slow version of "Bink's Sake". Of course, Sanji's goal had its selfish intentions as well. He was hoping that if Nami noticed how much he was supporting Luffy that she would warm up to him more.

During one of these dinners, Shadow and Darkess both looked up into the sky suddenly. With no warning the two of them were in the sky. A roar ringing through the air caused quite a panic on the Sunny and Law's ship. Brook, Chopper and Usopp started running around, declaring that a sea king was close. "There's no need to panic," Kagome yelled out. "It looks like our help has finally come."

"That's right," Rain agreed. "That roar was just the Alpha calling to Shadow and Darkess." Rain blinked at her own statement and started to get pale. Within seconds she was pacing the length of the ship. "This isn't good," she was muttering. "If the Alpha is here then he's here. If he's here, surely the other followed. No way is Luffy going to get out of this without a fight." She was pacing so quick that Franky was a little concerned she would wear out the wood.

Luffy couldn't take the worry coming from Rain. He started to pace after her. When Rain turned around she bumped into him. Luffy put one arm around her waist and the other behind her head. "It will be fine," he said. "I can handle anything that comes. I won't let anything take you away from me." He kissed her lightly on the forehead.

"Now I'm glad I managed to convince Rock it was just a diplomatic mission," a male's voice said.

The Straw Hats and Law looked up the main mast of the Sunny. Half on the roof of the lookout and half hanging over the side was a black dragon nearly twice the size of Darkess. On its back was a man dressed in armor nearly identical to Rain's. Usopp, Chopper and Brook froze in terror. Nami was hiding behind Robin.

Rain gently stepped away from Luffy and moved to face the new arrival. "I'm so happy that you came," she said. The dragon jumped to the deck of the Sunny. The man got off and removed his helmet. "It's so good to see you, Dad."

That statement was like a signal to the rest of the crew. Knowing that the man was Rain's father, the tension immediately eased. Rain walked up to Hiccup and gave him a hug. A pressure against her leg alerted her to the dragon. "I'm happy to see you too Toothless." She gave the older dragon an affectionate pat on his head. Once finished, Rain faced the rest of the Strawhats. "Everyone, I would like to introduce you to my father. Hiccup, former chief of Berk and the first Dragon Trainer. This is his Dragon Partner Toothless, he's Darkess' father."

Two other dragons landed on the deck. One was Valka, who everyone recognized. The other was a Monstrous Nightmare which most thought was Inferno, carrying a man who wasn't Souta. Rain went up to the Nightmare. The massive dragon let out a thrumming sound and nuzzled her. "I've missed you too, Hook Fang," she said. "I'm glad that you came." She then looked up to his rider. "It's also good to see you again Snotlout."

"Are you serious?" Usopp asked. "His name is really Snotlout?"

"You've got a problem with that long nose?" Snotlout demanded.

Shadow and Darkess returned to the deck of the ship, between Snotlout and Usopp. The action effectively stopped any further altercations. Hiccup could only shake his head at Snotlout, he wasn't surprised that the surly viking was trying to start a fight. Valka came up and gave Rain a hug in greeting.

Hiccup turned away from Snotlout, shutting out any more complaints from the over loud male. His attention was now focused completely on Luffy. "So you're the one that has caught my daughter's interest?" he asked. "My mother has told me much about you. So you're the captain?"

"I am," Luffy answered.

Rain moved to stand next to Luffy, however she was stopped by Valka. "Trust your father," she said. "He's not like your brother when it comes to these things."

Hiccup extended his hand out to Luffy. The two men shook hands for a moment. As they were still shaking hands Toothless came up and sniffed at Luffy. He sat back and looked very pleased with himself. Hiccup also released Luffy's hand with a smile.

Swift chose that moment to come out of the saddle bag on Toothless' saddle. He went up and snuggled up to Luffy upon seeing him. Hiccup had always trusted the instincts of dragons. Hiccup nodded and patted Luffy on the shoulder. "I can see that you're a good man," he said. "Now we just have to figure out how to get Rock to let his little sister be with you."

"Dad, are you sure that Rock is still on Berk and didn't follow you?" Rain was wringing her hands together in nervousness.

"We first gave him the excuse of going on a diplomatic mission, looking for neighbors and allies. Just before we left I put Gobber in charge of keeping him in Berk. He'll sit on Rock to keep him there if he has to."

"Pardon my intrusion," Sanji walked up. "Is Rain's brother really as bad as you make him out to be?"

"He's as steadfast as a rock in his views," Valka put in. "He was certainly named appropriately. Rock reminds me of my husband, Hiccup's father, before he passed. His name was Stoic the Vast. He was just as unmovable in his views as his name suggests. It will be

hard to convince Rock that his little sister doesn't need him to protect her. We've tried to convince him for a few years now, ever since Rain has been considered an adult."

"So how do we manage to convince him?" Nami asked.

"The whole village will have to help us in getting him to change his mind. The village already understands that Rain is an adult. It's hard to get Rock to follow those same views. If the village rallies as a whole then Rock will have no choice but to follow the majority vote. He might not be happy about it, but the people of the village and their views come before the wants of the chief." Hiccup explained patiently to the crew.

"How do we go about that?" Usopp asked.

"We beat Rock into submission," Snotlout announced.

"Let me know how well that works out for you," Rain spoke. "You haven't been able to beat Rock in a match since he was a child."

"First things are first," Valka cut in. "Your message said that a few of your friends needed to travel to check on their families?"

"We do," Nami shouted out. She went up to Valka. "We were told that one of our enemies is checking out our families and friends, trying to see if they can find out more about us. We need to make sure that no one is hurt or if the enemy was even there at all."

"I think that we can manage that," Hiccup said. "So how many want to go?"

"I have to go," Nami said. "My island has already been through so much because of pirates. I can't sit back and let it happen again."

"I have to protect Kaya," Usopp declared. "I'm definitely going."

"Let Curly Brows go," Zoro said. "He'll only be getting in the way here if he stays."

"You'll get in my way if you stay," Sanji charged back at Zoro.

"I take it that the two of them fight a lot?" Hiccup asked Luffy.

"All the time," Luffy agreed.

"Who has the most reason to go?" Hiccup asked.

"Sanji left the man that raised him and his restaurant to travel with us," Luffy explained. "Zoro has admitted on more than one occasion that he doesn't really have anywhere left to return to. Sanji has more of a reason to go to East Blue than Zoro."

"That settles it then," Valka claimed. She put her hand on Nami's shoulder. "The two of us will head to Nami's home town. Who lives the furthest away from here?"

"That would be Usopp," Nami said. "But Sanji lived on a restaurant boat. It travels all over the East Blue. It would not be in the same place as where we first met."

"In that case, Sanji should ride with Hiccup. He and Toothless are the fastest flyers Berk has." Valka's statement caused Darkess to let out a growl. "No offense girl, your father is just more experienced. His wing span is also longer."

Rain leaned down to whisper to Darkess. "It's just a polite way of saying he's old."

"What does wingspan have to do with it?" Usopp asked.

"The larger the wingspan the bigger the wind displacement and thrust," Rain explained. "Dad, would you and Toothless care to give a demonstration with Darkess and I?"

"What would you suggest?" Hiccup asked.

Rain looked up into the sky. She stopped and pointed up to the clouds. "The largest cloud, first to circle around it and land back on deck wins."

"It's a deal," Hiccup grinned. He put on his helmet and got on Toothless. He waited for Rain and Darkess to be ready for the race.

Once everyone was clear of the two dragons and riders Valka called out, "Start!"

The two dragons took off. The action caused the Sunny to pitch back and forth. Luffy stared closely at the two ascending dragons. The larger dragon was edging his way to the front. He was already a length ahead of Darkess when they were rounding the cloud.

The race was over in just a few seconds. Toothless landed on the deck first. Shortly after, Darkess landed next to him. "So do you all understand how the larger wingspan is the faster?" Rain asked.

"Doesn't Cloud Jumper have four wings?" Usopp asked. "Does that mean he's the fastest flyer?"

"Cloud Jumper doesn't have as sleek a body frame as Toothless or Darkess," Valka said. "Night Fury breed of dragons have evolved for maximum speed and stealth."

"Are you all done?" Law asked. "The faster that you leave the faster you can come back."

"The broody one has a point," Valka joked. "We need to leave if we're going to help you're families."

"Sanji needs to ride with Dad," Rain said. "Since there's no telling where the Baratie is now he needs to be with the fastest team. That leaves Usopp to ride with Snotlout."

"Are you kidding me?" Usopp demanded. "There's no way I can ride with

this guy."

"It's the only way to get you to see your friends and family," Valka said.

"I could always ride with Rain," Usopp argued.

"Not a chance," Luffy denied. "I'm riding with Rain to Foosha Village. From there, we'll meet everyone back up in Berk."

The entire crew fell silent. "Are you crazy?" Usopp cried. "You want to go to the place where Rain's brother, a man who potentially hates you, is?"

"I have a lot of people that don't like me," Luffy pointed out. "The entire navy being one of them. I'm not looking to make an enemy anyway. I want to meet Rain's brother."

"In that case we should get going Sanji," Hiccup called out. "We'll find your restaurant and then head everyone off to Berk. I'll need to talk to a few people about all the guests we'll be having." Sanji got into the saddle with Hiccup and Toothless was in the air. "Not to mention that I will need to tell Eret that he needs to stick closer to Rock in case he decides to attack Luffy."

The rest of the dragons were up in the air. This included Kagome and Dragon. Shadow veered off towards the Revolutionary Island. The other four dragons started going in the direction of East Blue. The eight travelers spent the night on an island just inside of East Blue. They set out again the next morning. They split up, each intending to reach their goal that day.

~ "I'm not saving you if you fall off LongNose," Snotlout declared. Usopp refused to sit too close to Snotlout. That left him in a vulnerable place on Hook Fang. He was struggling to keep his balance. If a strong wind were to come up then he would definitely plummet into the ocean.

"If you don't save me then the eight thousand pirates under my command will avenge me."

"If you think I'll fall for that then you have another thing coming," Snotlout said. "You're just a coward that doesn't know how to fight. Even if you do have that many men, if they're all like you, I could take them all out with both hands tied behind my back."

Before Usopp could say anything his island came within sight. Snotlout didn't listen to him when he told him to land near the ocean, away from the village. Instead, Snotlout landed right in the middle of the village. It caused a panic within the village.

Three children with hairstyles that made them look like various vegetables edged their way closer. They were threatening to call their eight thousand pirates to attack the monster.

"It's alright guys," Usopp called. He jumped off Hook Fang. "I just wanted to see how you guys are doing since I left."

The three children stood there, tears streaming down their faces. They suddenly bolted for Usopp and tackled him to the ground. "I'm

happy to see you too," Usopp laughed. "Have you been keeping an eye on Kaya?"

"We've been keeping an eye on Kaya," Carrot answered. "Right now she isn't here though. She was called to help another doctor on the neighboring island."

"I'm glad to hear that she's safe," Usopp sighed. "Have there been any strangers on the island?"

"Now that you mention it," Pepper said. "There has been two strange-looking people hanging around the town. They left only two days ago."

"What were they after?"

"They were asking weird questions about you," Onion answered. "Like if you were born on this island, if you've been gone long or if you've come back to visit. They also were asking if you had anyone special. No one told them anything about you or how you like Kaya."

"Okay, listen up guys," Usopp took in a breath. "There are some pirates out there that are trying to hurt the pirate crew I'm with. We've just received news that they're trying to get information on us. I came back to make sure that the rest of you are fine."

~ "It's so wonderful," Valka was grinning. "You have to tell me all the details."

Nami let out a laugh. "When Rain got back from her little adventure in the Marine town Luffy started following her like a lost puppy. Once she turned around and bumped into him he held onto her and wouldn't let her go. That's when Luffy confessed his love for Rain."

"Oh I wish I could have been there," Valka said. "I can just imagine the look on Rain's face."

"You should have seen her face when he pulled her into a kiss," Nami laughed. "She was so shocked at first. Then she just melted into his arms. It was so romantic."

"You're tempting me to join your crew just so that I can see the rest of this relationship develop."

Whatever Nami was going to say was stopped when she spotted her island. "Land in that tangerine grove outside of town," Nami informed. "My sister should be there this time of day."

"What's your sister's name?" Valka asked.

"Nojiko," Nami informed.

There was no one around when the two landed. Nami jumped off Cloud Jumper and headed over to the house in the middle of the tangerine grove. Inside, drinking from a steaming mug was Nojiko. She looked up when Nami opened the door. "Nami," she stood up immediately. The two sisters shared an embrace. "What are you doing here?"

"I was worried about everyone," Nami said. She then told Nojiko about what was going on with the Blackbeard pirates. Nojiko reassured Nami that there had been nothing out of the ordinary.

"That's a good thing," Valka said. She was standing in the doorway. "That means that they haven't been here yet and you can build a defense. At the very least you could spread false information."

"What type of information?" Nami asked.

"An example would be that the town hates her because she joined the pirates."

"We don't hate her," Nojiko said. "She tried so hard to save the town from pirates."

"That would make hating her the perfect excuse," Valka countered. "If you give them information about hating her then they would have no reason to linger here. They wouldn't take it out on the villagers." The two women finally agreed and they set out about coming up with a plan.

~ Sanji was a little frustrated. The wind was going by so fast that he couldn't keep a flame lit long enough for him to have a smoke. He had told Hiccup stories of Luffy's adventures. Hiccup wanted to get more in depth information on the man that was getting into a relation with his daughter.

Hiccup interrupted the story at the time. "I'm sorry to stop you," Hiccup said. "Didn't you say that the restaurant you worked at looked like a fish?"

Sanji looked over Hiccup's shoulder and Toothless' head. Just ahead was a ship that looked like a blue fish. "That would be it," Sanji said. Toothless landed on the deck of the ship, opposite of a passenger ship tied to the Baratie.

"Wait for me here," Sanji said. He started walking for the entrance as he lit a cigarette. "This shouldn't take too long."

Hiccup watched as Sanji disappeared inside. He and Toothless were just settling down to wait when the sounds of fighting came from inside. The sounds died almost as soon as they started. It wasn't long before Sanji came sauntering back out. He had his hands in his pockets, smirking. He pulled out one hand to take hold of the nearly burnt out cigarette and tossed it into the ocean.

"We can go now," Sanji declared. He climbed back onto the back of Toothless.

"Do you mind if I ask what that was all about?" Hiccup asked.

"I just told them not to tell anyone about me or else," Sanji said.

"Then what happened?"

"They chose the 'or else'."

~ Luffy's arms were tightly wrapped around Rain. His chin was leaning on her shoulder. "We're close to the island where I grew up," Luffy informed.

"You don't sound too happy about that," Rain pointed out.

"I would have to give up my hold on you," Luffy smirked. Rain let out a laugh at that. Luffy squeezed her just a little tighter. "There's the island over there." Luffy was pointing off to the side. "Land towards the center, that's where I spent most of my childhood. I need to talk to the people who live there."

"Are those the people that raised you?" Rain asked.

"In a way," Luffy said. "I was mostly raised by my older brother Ace. We would explore the wild, training by fighting bears and tigers."

Darkess maneuvered to land towards the center of the island Luffy pointed out. The dragon landed in front of a log cabin. "Stay on Darkess," Luffy informed. He got off of the dragon and started for the cabin. "Dadan," he called out. "Are you guys home?"

The door burst open and a large woman came out. She reminded Rain of the typical viking female warriors back on Berk, except she looked more like a male. She had curly red hair. "My Luffy," she called out. To Luffy's surprise, Dadan burst into tears and ran for him. She pulled him into a tight hug. "I'm so sorry about Ace. Thank goodness that you're alright."

"That was two years ago," Luffy said. He glanced at Rain, in a way telling her how long it's been since he lost his foster-brother. "A lot has happened since then."

Dadan pulled away from Luffy. She then stared pointedly at Rain and Darkess. "It would seem that way. Who are these two?"

"Have you been keeping up with the wanted posters of my crew?" Luffy asked.

Dadan looked sharply at him and then back to the dragon and rider. "Are you telling me that this woman is the 'Dragon Mistress' in the wanted poster?"

"The one and the same," Luffy grinned.

Dadan stared at him closely. She noted that Luffy was keeping himself between his partner and the cabin. "What else?" Dadan asked.

Luffy grinned and took a step closer to Rain. "I think you already know what else," he said. Dadan smirked and took a hold of Luffy. She put him in a head lock and started giving him a noogie. "That-a-boy," she cheered. "I knew that you always had it in you."

Dadan let go of Luffy and looked over to Rain. "Get off of that bird with teeth and let me get a good look at you," she ordered. Rain looked towards Luffy who nodded. Rain got off of Darkess and slowly moved closer. Dadan took a hold of Rain's chin and moved her head from one side to the other, looking her over. Once the inspection was finished Dadan nodded and let go of Rain. "You don't seem like you

see a lot of hand to hand combat," she commented. "Although, you do have a build of a fighter."

"I train often with my family," Rain said. "My whole village is full of warriors. We also fight on the backs of our dragons. It's most effective against those that don't know how to fight anything airborne."

"It sounds like you know your combat situations," Dadan grinned. She then surprised Rain by pulling her into a hug. "I'm glad to hear that you know how to carry your own weight," she said. She finally let go and stepped back. "So now, what brings the two of you here? I know Luffy enough to know that he won't stop any of his adventures before he's finished to come here for a casual visit. Since there's been no news of you becoming the King of Pirates I'm assuming that there's something going on." Luffy and Rain told Dadan about what was going on with Blackbeard. "No one has been out this way," Dadan said. "Of course, your grandfather made sure that absolutely no one knew of your existence let alone location before you could take care of yourself."

Luffy then nodded in understanding. "Then there's no need to worry about you," he declared. "We'll be heading to Foosha now. I need to make sure that Makino and the Mayor are fine."

"While you're down there, say 'hello' to your grandfather," Dadan ordered. "Since he's been retired he's lived in the village. I know that he's just as worried about you as the rest of us." Luffy nodded solemnly and motioned for Rain to get on the back of Darkess. "We'll be heading over there now."

Dadan watched the two of them get on Darkess. When Luffy put his arms around Rain she had devious smirk. "You two better let me know when the wedding is."

Rain's face turned beet red and Luffy smirked. "Don't worry Dadan," Luffy said. "I'll be sure to send a message or at least a ride to the wedding."

"Luffy!" Darkess started laughing as she took off into the sky.

In a few minutes the two were on the outskirts of the village. Darkess landed next to the burnt foundations of Kagome's home.

"This place feels familiar," Luffy spoke softly.

"I'm not too surprised," Rain said. "When Kagome and I started the search for you this was the second place we stopped. She told me that was the house where you were born."

Luffy slowly got off of Darkess and headed for the burnt house. He started to walk through the ashes. He ended up in the room towards the back. "This is also where my mom was taken from me," Luffy whispered.

"How did you know that?" Rain asked. She stood just outside of the foundation to give Luffy his space.

"I don't know," Luffy said. "It just feels like it's the right answer." Luffy stopped, took a deep breath and made his way back to

Rain. He kissed her lightly on the lips and hugged her. "If it wasn't for that then I never would have met you." Rain returned the hug, her head tucked under Luffy's chin.

Luffy leaned back and smiled. "Let's get going," he said. "I don't want to be out here when it's dark." Luffy took Rain by the hand and led her towards town. Darkess was following close behind them.

The sun was just setting when they reached town. The bar Makino owned was filling with customers. Luffy had a huge grin on his face as he headed into the building. He entered the room quietly and moved to sit at the bar. Luffy took the seat where he used to always sit as a child. It didn't take long for Makino to notice him. "Luffy!" Makino leaned over the bar and gave Luffy a hug. "It's so nice to see you," she said. She then looked over to the seat next to him. "Rain, it's so good to see you again too. Is Kagome with you?" She then looked to Luffy and back to Rain.

"Luffy and Kagome have met," Rain assured. "The two have spent a bit of time together."

"I'm glad to hear it," Makino smiled. She looked behind the two and smiled bigger. "I see that the Mayor wants to talk to you Luffy."

Luffy looked behind him, when he did the Mayor motioned him over. Luffy put his hand on Rain's shoulder and kissed her when she looked at him. "I'll be right back," he stood up and went to the Mayor.

Rain turned back to Makino to see her giving a knowing look. "I'm glad to see that Luffy has found someone reliable," she said.

Rain blushed and gave a nod. "We didn't come here to just visit," she admitted. "We received word that someone has dug into everyone's past from the East Blue. We were worried about everyone. Has there been anyone new or strange to the village?"

"As a matter-of-fact," Makino started. "There was a man who was poking around the docks. He was heavy-set, missing teeth and had a black beard."

Rain winced at the news. "What happened after that?" she asked.

"Garp got involved," Makino said. "He recognized Blackbeard right away. He called the marines and it wasn't long before a ship docked just off shore. The sight scared him off. I don't doubt that he might try to come back though."

"How long ago was that?" Rain asked.

"Blackbeard left two days ago," Makino said. "The Marines left yesterday." She nodded sympathetically when Rain let out a groan. "There's a chance someone could report Luffy being here and it won't take them long to show up."

"Then we need to wrap things up," Rain said.

"I don't think that it will take too long," Makino agreed. "I do have

a question for you though." She then pointed to the wall where she was mandated to post wanted flyers. There was a fresh poster of a woman wearing a mask with a false name under it. "Do you have any idea who that 'Dragon Mistress' is?" Rain's blush came back once again. "I thought so," Makino laughed.

Luffy showed up that point. "It's time for us to go," Luffy said. "We need to go talk to my grandpa really quick and then leave."

"You kids play it safe now," Makino waved. Rain blushed even more so and Luffy just had a look of confusion. "Get going you two."

Luffy and Rain walked towards the house that was owned by Luffy's grandfather, Monkey D. Garp. Luffy barged into the house without knocking. Rain stopped at the door, not sure if she should follow or not. The decision was taken from her when Luffy stretched his arm out and pulled her in after him. Once Rain was tucked into his side Luffy ducked the both of them sharply. Rain felt a breeze pass over the both of them. When they stood up straight Luffy blocked another attack for his head. He then moved so that the arm was pulled passed them. With a heavy thud the attacker was then on the floor. "Nice to see you too Grandpa," Luffy said.

The man on the floor slowly stood up. A light clicked on as the man reached above him and turned on the table lamp. He then slowly turned to face the two in the room. He froze when he finally saw that Luffy had his arm wrapped around the woman that was with him. "You must be the famed Vice-Admiral Garp," Rain broke the silence.

"Former," Garp announced as he approached. "I retired when the Marines started to target my grandson with undue prejudice." Garp stared at the two of them for a moment longer. "Who might you be?"

"My name is Rain," she announced. "I'm a friend of Kagome's since during the time of her disappearance."

"You look the same age as Luffy," Garp commented. "I can sense a different story here."

"Kagome saved my life," Rain said. "I was an infant when my mother died. If Kagome hadn't taken the responsibility to raise myself and my brother until she could return to Luffy I, at the very least, would not have survived. Is there anything else you would like to know Mr. Garp?"

"Nothing else," Garp said. "There is one thing I would like from you though." He looked pointedly to the arm that Luffy still had around Rain's shoulders. "From now on, you can call me Grandpa."

15. Viva Revolution

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****A Family of Outlaws****

Chapter Fourteen: Viva Revolution

When Kagome and Dragon separated from the Strawhat crew they took an extra day to themselves before heading to the revolutionary army. Sabo was waiting for them when Shadow finally landed on the island. "Everyone is in place and has given the ready signal," he reported. Sabo matched the pace of Dragon and Kagome as they entered the building. "We only need your word and we can announce our intentions to the world."

Dragon nodded his head with a smirk. "Very good," he said. "Let's not waste anymore time. The more chaos we can weave into the ranks of the marines the better. It will give Luffy and his crew plenty of opportunity to reach their goals." Dragon led the way to his chambers. He held the door open for Kagome to step through. He then turned to Sabo. "Be ready to broadcast in ten minutes. I want to change into something more fitting for war then a traveling robe." Sabo nodded and headed off to get ready.

In the room, Kagome was pacing back and forth. "I should have gone with them," she muttered. "Rock isn't known for being flexible. His name is Rock for crying out loud. As in unmovable and hard."

"Rain's father and grandmother are on their side," Dragon soothed. "They'll make sure that nothing happens to Luffy that can't be undone. Besides, as admirable as it is to protect one's sister I can't believe that Rock would deny Rain of her happiness. You need to put a little more faith in the younger generation."

"Truth be told I have a lot of things running through my mind now," Kagome admitted. "The main thing being Rock and Luffy. I'm also worried about this broadcast of yours. What if it doesn't reach around the world like you hope it would? What if it's traced back to this island? What if they already know where this island is and are just waiting to ambush? People paying attention to the broadcast would be enough to catch us off guard to make the ambush a success. What if..."

"Hush Kagome," Dragon stopped his wife with two fingers to her lips. "If you keep thinking about the 'what ifs' then the 'what is' will pass you by. I have faith that Hiccup will not let harm come to Luffy. At least no harm that's lethal. You've known them for several years. You've raised Rock and Rain. Those two had the best role model they could have had. I'm sure that Rock will take into consideration that Luffy is your son. He might just give his blessing to Luffy to continue a relationship with Rain based on that. In either event, do you really think that you raised a man to be so heartless and cruel as to make his sister suffer in loneliness?"

"Well no, Rock wouldn't hurt Rain at all."

"Then trust in that," Dragon continued. "Trust that Rock will behave in the way that you raised him and that everything will be fine." Kagome let out a deep breath and nodded. "Good, now let's get out of these traveling clothes. We have a declaration of war to make and should look the part."

Sabo walked behind Caesar Clown as he and two others were leading him to the broadcast center. "You will admit to everything that happened on Punkhazard," Sabo was ordering. "That you were responsible for the

explosion four years ago, kidnapped those children, performed experiments on them and that you were the one that created S.M.I.L.E. Failure to do any of those will not be a pleasant experience for you." To emphasize his point, Sabo held a flame in his hand.

"Alright already, I get the point." Ceasar had a pout on his face. "You don't have to be so mean to me all the time."

"While we're at it," Sabo continued. He let the flame go out as he lowered his hand. "You also need to mention your connection to Doflomingo and his role as the criminal mastermind Joker."

"Do I look like I have a death wish?" Ceasar winced when Sabo brought his hand back up with the fire. "Fine, I'll do it, but it's under protest."

"Noted," Sabo let out a grin over his victory. The rest of the walk was done in silence. Once they got there, Sabo chained Ceasar to a chair off to the side, but within the projector snail's turn radius. A blank, dark green wall was the focal point of everything in the room.

The Revolutionaries that were in charge of the broadcast didn't have to wait for very long before Dragon and Kagome made their entrance. Dragon was wearing a black shirt under his usual green robe. The hood was down, showing his chiseled features. Kagome stood next to him in her priestess robes, her bow in hand and a quiver full of arrows strapped to her back. The two looked like they meant business.

When the two were ready, Dragon nodded to Sabo. Sabo gave the team the signal to interrupt all the other transponder and projector snails. Once he was given the sign for success he started the projector snail that would send Dragon and Kagome's message around the world. He then nodded to Dragon when it was ready.

"My name is Monkey D. Dragon," he announced. "This is my wife, Kagome. We are the leaders of the Revolutionary Army against the World Government and its nobles. Recently we have come to have in our custody a very dangerous person that was responsible for the explosion on Punkhazard four years ago, Ceasar Clown."

Sabo turned the snail so that it was now looking at their prisoner. "Say 'hello' to the world Ceasar," Dragon ordered.

"I am Ceasar Clown," Ceasar admitted. "It's true that it was I that caused the explosion on Punkhazard. I am also the one responsible for several cases of missing children. I had them kidnapped and brought to me to perform experiments on." Ceasar then clamped his mouth refusing to say anything further, already knowing that little information would have him condemned.

"What else have you done Ceasar?" Kagome demanded. Her reiki flared, making Ceasar flinch at the threat despite it not reaching him.

"I'm also the one that created an artificial Devil Fruit called S.M.I.L.E. My benefactor, Joker, has been selling it on the Black Market."

"Who, exactly, is Joker?" Dragon asked.

"Joker's real name is Don Quixote Doflomingo."

~ In a hut, somewhere on a remote island, a glass could be heard shattering. Doflomingo, still bandaged from his fight against Strawhat, was glaring and growling at the image of Ceasar. Now the Marines would start chasing him down and not ignore his actions as they had done in the past. There was truly no safe place for him to go any longer.

~ Sabo turned the snail back to face Dragon and Kagome once Ceasar finished his speech. "As terrible as those things are, it pales in comparison to what the Celestial Dragons have done over the eight hundred years they have held power," Dragon seethed. "How many innocent people were killed for simply being in the wrong place at the wrong time? I doubt we could even begin counting. How many others were sold into slavery? Children slaughtered just because they didn't understand that the Celestial Dragons **think** that they're better than everyone else in the world? The actions of Doflomingo were ignored by the approval of the Celestial Dragons. How much longer will you good people of the world tolerate these people walking all over you?"

"If you truly look at a Celestial Dragon, they're not some mystical creature. They're human, just like the rest of us. They need to eat, breathe and drink to stay alive like the rest of us. If you cut them, they will bleed like us. They can be killed just as easily as they have killed others. There's nothing special that holds them above us. They have ancestors that created the World Government that rules us. Those ancestors have been dead for a long time. What have the Celestial Dragons since then done to better the world? The answer to that is simple, nothing. The only thing that they do is revel in their own perceived self-importance and sow misery into the lives of those around them."

Dragon stopped in his rant and gestured for Sabo to join him. He had Sabo stand in front of him as he put his hand on his shoulder. "This young man's name is Sabo. He comes from the same island as my son, Luffy. The two of them used to play together. Sabo was born into a noble family that he ran away from. However, it was unfortunate that he crossed paths with a Celestial Dragon when he was only a ten-year-old child. He was in a raft he had built trying to escape from his life as a noble. The Celestial Dragon had his ship blown out of the water with the intent on killing the child on board. Obviously Sabo survived, but not without a reminder of the atrocities committed against him. The scar above his left eye is a constant reminder for him. It took all the healer's skill and medical knowledge to not only save Sabo's life, but to make sure that he didn't lose his eye. He is only one example of the cruelty performed against the common people. In the end, no justice was ever sought after by Sabo's birth parents. They allowed their son to be 'killed' without seeking retribution."

Dragon paused a moment to let all that sink into the people of the world. "This cruelty without punishment has gone on for far too long. We of the Revolutionary Army are declaring war against the World Government, Celestial Dragons and all world nobles. We demand you step down from power and give control to the common people. Should you fail to surrender peacefully and continue to treat others as if they are less than human, we will gladly rip you from your positions

and hold you accountable for each and every atrocity committed according to the laws you've placed on the common people."

~ All across the world Marine bases were scrambling, trying to find a way to cancel the transmission. Nobles were demanding that they put a stop to it at once. Nothing they did seemed to help. The controls that would have ended the transmission weren't working. Once the declaration of war was spoken marine ships started sinking or exploding. Several ships would lower their sails, only to discover that their steering had been tampered with and they had no control of the ship. Still in other places, communications had been cut off from one base to the next. All of this was sabotage done by Revolutionists that had been placed strategically within the ranks of the marines and have waited for the signal. Some of them had waited for several years for the signal.

In some cities the nobles were cut off from the rest of the city and from the Marine Bases. When the nobles tried to get their slaves to do something about the blockades they found that their slaves had disappeared from under their noses. The Revolutionists had become paid servants of the nobles for the sole purpose of freeing the slaves just before the blockades were put up.

~ Dragon had a satisfied smirk when the broadcast was finished. He led Kagome and Sabo to the war conference room. The leaders of the army would be waiting for them there. "All those years spent away from you and Luffy are finally coming to fruition. With the odds on our side, we will soon have equality for all people of the world and no one would ever have to worry about looking at the wrong person cross-eyed ever again."

**To all my readers out there. I would like your opinion on a one shot story. It's a One Piece/Inuyasha cross-over. I don't want to give away the plot or too much other information. So my one question is, should Rain be in that story as well? I know a few of you like her in this story as a character and I was just wondering if you wanted to see her in other stories as well.**

16. Luffy Between a Rock and a Garp Place

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**I'm sorry about not updating sooner. Between working overtime and moving I haven't been able to update for a little while.**

A Family of Outlaws

Chapter Fifteen: Luffy Between a Rock and a Garp Place

Note: I would like the opinion of my readers. I have another story idea involving a One Piece and Inuyasha cross-over once again. Now, I don't want to give too much of the storyline away. My only question is, would you like to see Rain and Rock make a comeback or just Rain? Now on with the story.

Rain blinked at Garp owlishly. She glanced over to Luffy. "Is he

being serious? I'm supposed to call him my Grandpa?" Luffy started to laugh and nodded his head. His grin told Rain that he was happy that his grandfather accepted her so readily.

Rain looked back to Garp who was looking back at her with expectation. "If you insist then, Grandpa." Rain let out a gasp of shock when Garp pulled her into a tight hug as his grin grew impossibly large.

Once Garp finally released Rain so that she could breathe freely he turned to Luffy. "What brings a notorious pirate to the house of a retired marine?" he asked.

Luffy lost his grin and a serious look took its place. The sudden change had Garp's full attention. "We had been given some distressing news," Rain spoke when she figured that Luffy still hadn't said anything. "We had a visit from one of Luffy's old friend's and he told us that Blackbeard was looking into the family and friends of the original Strawhat Crew."

"Is that what he was doing?" Garp asked. "Now I'm sorry that I didn't just turn him into the Marines. He's going a too far on this." Garp fell silent as he started to think on things. "Then, Luffy, this is what we're going to do. You're going to start training with me again and we'll start now."

"I can't train Gramps," Luffy said.

"Why not?" Garp asked.

Luffy's lips pouted out and he glanced to the side, "I don't want to." Garp started growling and approached Luffy in a threatening manner.

Garp stopped in his tracks when Rain inserted herself between him and Luffy. "I'm sorry Grandpa," she apologized. "What Luffy really means to say is that we just don't have the time for him to train with you now. We have to meet the others tomorrow. If we don't arrive at the meeting place on time then they'll start to freak out. Trust me, the last thing you want is for a whole village of Dragon Riders to start scouring the seas for us."

Garp stared at Rain for a moment and then looked up to Luffy. "Then there's only one thing left to do," Garp decided. "Luffy, you need the extra training. If you can't stay and train then I need to come with you."

"You can't be serious," Luffy yelled. "There's no way that you're coming with us."

"What are you going to do to stop me?" Garp asked.

"Try riding a dragon out of here that doesn't have enough room for three riders," Luffy argued.

"I'm not going to let you out of this house in that case," Garp continued.

When Luffy looked like he was going to keep arguing Rain decided that she needed to intervene again. She whipped around to face Luffy, she

put her hands on either side of his head and pulled him into a kiss. When she pulled away Luffy had a look of bliss on his face. Rain then turned to Garp. "I'll see if I can get someone to come and give you a ride."

Rain then turned to Luffy. "Will it be so bad to have your grandfather meet my family?" she asked.

"No," Luffy grumbled. He couldn't deny Rain anything that she wanted, he knew that already. Behind Rain's back, but within Luffy's view, Garp made a whipping motion. Rain gave Luffy a charming smile and headed out to the back of the house. She stood there with the door opened for a few seconds before Darkess landed in front of her. Rain pulled Swift out of his roost from the saddle bag. She brought him inside, trying to get him to wake while she wrote out a note.

Once the note was finished she attached it to Swift's leg. "I need you to bring this to Gobber," she instructed. "The same rules apply as the last time you returned to Berk. You can't let Rock see you." Rain then released Swift to the outside world and watched him fly off into the night.

~ Gobber woke to the sounds of scratching on his door in the middle of the night. Letting out a few choice words he rolled out of bed. Wearing only his small clothes he opened the door to his home. He ducked as Swift flew in, skimming the top of his head. The small dragon sat on the table, waiting for him. Gobber hobbled his way over and took the note off of Swift's leg. He gave it a once over then grumbled some more as he went to put on some clothing.

Gobber then headed out of the house, Swift following close behind. Stomping his way across the village to the house he wanted, Gobber started pounding on the door loudly to wake its occupants. The door swung open so hard it nearly fell from its hinges. Eret glared out to see who was disturbing him at this time of night. Without a word, Gobber held out the note Rain had sent as his way of an explanation for the intrusion. Eret read the contents quickly and disappeared back inside, closing the door on Gobber's face.

Eret emerged a few minutes later, dressed and with his riding gear. Without a word to Gobber he went to where Skull Crusher slept at night. Swift stayed with Gobber, he didn't want to go against Rain's instructions after all. It wasn't long before Eret returned, Skull Crusher in tow. He took Swift from his perch on Gobber's shoulder and looked him in the eye. "Lead us back to Rain," he ordered. "I'll go and help her." Swift started to fly away as Eret climbed Skull Crusher. The two of them followed after the Terrible Terror.

~ During the night Luffy and Rain slept in Garp's house. Rain was given the guest room while Luffy was left to sleep on the couch. He didn't mind too much, he wanted Rain to be comfortable.

The market stall owners were busy setting up for the day. All action halted when a large lizard with wings landed in the middle of the street. Some of the weaker willed denizens started crying out in fear. The commotion drew the attention of those that remained in their houses, including Garp's house.

Garp was the first one out of the door. Luffy was right behind him, followed by Rain. At the sight, Rain couldn't stop herself from

laughing. Both Luffy and Garp looked at her in confusion. Rain shook her head as she calmed down. "There's nothing to worry about," she finally managed. "That's only Eret and his dragon. Gobber must have sent him after reading my letter."

"What exactly did your letter say?" Luffy asked.

"Nothing much," Rain gave a shrug. "Just that we needed help getting an extra person back to the village."

Garp nodded in understanding as he headed towards the gathering crowd. He stopped anyone from out right attacking the dragon and his rider. "Nothing to see here," he announced. "Everyone just go back to your business and I'll take care of everything."

The crowd started murmuring about what Garp would do to the stranger, but followed what he asked and slowly started to go about their day. Some paused when another Dragon joined the fray. Darkess started cuddling up next to Rain to show that the people had nothing to fear from it.

Eret got off of his dragon once everyone had finally left them alone. With a smirk, Eret opened his arms towards Rain. "It's good to see you again Uncle Eret," Rain said as she gave Eret a hug. Rain pulled away and stepped back. "I want you to meet someone."

Rain went up to Luffy at this point. "Uncle Eret, this is Luffy. He's the captain of the crew that he had me join, he's also..."

"He had you join?" Eret let out a little laugh.

"There was a bit of coercion involved," Rain laughed. "He didn't have to try too hard though. I wanted to join them on their adventures."

"So is that all you wanted to tell me?" Eret asked.

"These two kids are in love," Garp interrupted.

Eret looked sharply towards Garp then back to Rain. She was looking down with a blush on her cheeks. Luffy had put an arm around her shoulders, giving her his support. Eret closed his eyes and nodded, now he understood why Gobber didn't want to bring Rain's request for help to Rock. He shook his head and chuckled as he looked to the young couple. He walked up to Luffy and held out his hand. Luffy looked shocked for a moment, but quickly accepted the offered hand with his free one. Once the two had grasped hands a contest of sorts started. Eret squeezed Luffy's hand tightly to test him. Luffy smirked when the pressure was added and started to squeeze back. The battle of wills lasted for a full minute before the two released their grip. Luffy looked down to Rain's face to see her looking up at him in question. He smiled at her and gave her a light kiss. "It's a man thing," he told her when he pulled back.

"Okay Rain," Eret pulled their attention back to him. "Now that the formalities are out-of-the-way. Who's this old guy?" He used his thumb to gesture over his shoulder towards Garp.

Luffy started laughing loudly to the affronted look on Garp's face. Rain covered her mouth with her hand to stifle a giggle. When she was

finally settled she was able to answer. "That man is Monkey D. Garp," she started. "He's Luffy's grandfather, he's also why I called for help. He wants to come with us to Berk and Darkess can't carry all three of us."

Eret had a shocked look on his face. He looked to Luffy and then to Rain. "You want to bring Luffy back to Berk while Rock is still alive?" Eret looked pointedly at Luffy then. "It was nice knowing you."

"Rock is not that bad," Rain protested. "I'm sure he'll listen to reason once Dad and I explain to him that I love Luffy."

"You give your brother too much credit," Eret said. "Either that or you underestimate how protective of you he is."

"Which has me wondering," Garp interrupted. "Why is Rain's brother so opposed to her being in a relationship with someone?"

"You have to look at it from his point of view," Eret explained. "Rock was three when Rain was born. He was old enough to remember a few things from back then. Such as how their mother was killed a few days after giving birth to Rain. He lost his mother at the same time he gained a sister. With Rain looking so much like their mother he naturally developed a strong attachment to her. He loved his baby sister when he first saw her, excited to be a big brother. When Astrid, their mother, died he took the love he had for his mother and added that to the love he already had for his sister. To lose Rain to a man not within the family already would be as close as losing their mother all over again."

"So why Rock is so overprotective is a mystery," Luffy theorized.

Eret looked at him with wide eyes and Rain started giggling at his reaction. "You have to take it in stride," Rain said. "There are things that go on in Luffy's head that even his oldest friends can't understand yet. Basically, he doesn't see how there's any point in worrying about Rock's reaction to him."

"Well he should," Eret grossed. "He's scrawny enough that all Rock will have to do is look at him to rip him in half." Luffy was ignoring what Eret said by patting Darkess and introducing himself to Skull Crusher. "Another one of your man's traits?" Eret asked. He was giving Rain a look that said he was having a hard time considering Luffy could defend himself against Rock.

"It's who he is," Rain shrugged. "So far he hasn't seen anything in the area that would be a threat to him or any others he cares about. You'll just have to take me at my word that he's a great warrior."

"I'll believe it when I see it."

"Dad accepted him, why are you having a hard time with it?"

"I accept him," Eret said. "He didn't back down from my challenge.."

"What challenge?"

"It's Rock that I'm considering here. I don't see how your man will survive if he doesn't take it seriously from the start. I mean look at him, he's smaller than your dad ever was."

"Then I guess that Luffy will just surprise you," Rain shrugged. "Now, will you help us by bringing Luffy's grandpa to Berk?"

Eret was silent for a moment. He finally let out a sigh and nodded. "I think that you shouldn't go to Berk though. Rock will tear Luffy in half. But, if you're confident in his abilities then I suppose I'll just have to go along with it."

Rain beamed a smile at Eret. "I knew I could count on you Uncle Eret," she said as she hugged him. "Thank you for helping us."

"You might not be thanking me at the end of the day." He gave a tired sigh as Rain just moved past him to give the news to Luffy and Garp. Telling them that as soon as they're ready they would head to Berk.

~ The first to arrive back to Berk were Hiccup and Sanji. It was hard to make a discreet landing in the middle of the day when you're riding the alpha of all the dragons. The roaring they caused in welcome was enough to rouse all the inhabitants to see what was going on. "So much for not being noticed," Sanji commented.

"It can't be helped," Hiccup said. "They would know that we're here sooner or later anyway. Just be prepared when you meet my son. Once he learns that you're a friend of Rain's he'll give you the third degree."

"Just by being her friend?" Sanji asked. His eyes were wide in disbelief.

"That's right," Hiccup let out a sigh. "We told all of you that he's overprotective."

"Yeah, but I didn't think that he would have an issue with her having friends."

"Not friends specifically," Hiccup corrected. "Just protests to her having male friends. There's a chance for romance in that case."

Sanji let out a small noise that was a cross between a laugh and a snort. "Then your son is going to blow a fuse when he learns about Luffy."

Hiccup's shoulders suddenly sagged as he admitted that Sanji was right. He stiffened his shoulders as they were getting closer to ground. "That's where Gobber and Eret come in. I left them behind so that they could help restrain Rock when the two of them finally arrive."

A crowd of people and dragons surrounded the arrivals upon landing. When Hiccup dismounted a large man with red hair and a short beard strode up to them. "Welcome home Dad," he said.

Sanji choked on the smoke he just inhaled from his cigarette. "That's

your son?" he rasped.

Hiccup let out a laugh at the reaction. He knew as much as everyone that Rock didn't look like either him or his mother. "That's right," Hiccup nodded. "This is my son Rock. When I show you a picture of my father then you'll see the resemblance."

"Who is this Dad?" Rock asked.

"This is Sanji," Hiccup started to introduce. "I met him in my travels. He's actually a good friend of Kagome's and Rain's now."

Rock's eyes narrowed as they zeroed in on the still recovering cook. Hiccup continued with the explanations before the wrong connections were made. "He's a part of a group that sails with Kagome's son around the world. He and his girlfriend, Nami." Sanji stiffened when Hiccup made that announcement. Hearts started showing in his eyes as he daydreamed of him and Nami behaving like a couple. He was too busy in his fantasy to see the tension in Rock's body melt away.

Rock looked around and then up into the sky. "Where is Grandma and Snotlout?" he asked.

Hiccup knew that it wouldn't take long for that question. He decided to tell Rock the truth, or at least part of it. "Snotlout is taking a new friend of ours to his hometown to check on his friends and fiancÃ©. He was concerned about an enemy snooping around where he doesn't belong." Rock nodded his head in acceptance. "Your grandma is with Nami. She wanted to check on her sister for the same reasons. Which is also why Sanji is with me. We went to check on the place where he grew up."

"Don't you mean his family?" Rock asked.

Sanji let another cigarette since the last one fell on the ground. He blew out the smoke and smirked. "I'm an orphan," he announced. "I was raised by a grumpy, one legged old man."

Hiccup burst out laughing when the villagers looked towards Gobber. "It wasn't me," Gobber snapped. "I've never seen this boy in my life."

Sanji blinked towards the man. He fit the description he just made perfectly. He started laughing at his own description. "Okay, let me rephrase. I was raised by an old, grumpy, one-legged former pirate that took up being a head chef and restaurant owner." The villagers let out a breath of relief.

The moment passed when Hook Fang landed with Snotlout and Usopp. Usopp fell on his face when Snotlout pushed him out of the saddle. "Hiccup," Snotlout called out. "Get someone else to bring him back to his ship. I can't stand being around that coward. I don't want any of his sissy attitude rubbing off on my dragon."

"Got it," Hiccup waved to Snotlout. "You can tell Roughnut we need Souta to leave her and the new baby to go traipsing around the world."

"You what!?"

Sanji watched as a scrawny woman with long, blonde hair stomped up to them. Souta was trailing after her, a small smirk on his face. He winked to Sanji, showing him he didn't have anything to worry about. The two were followed by a group of five kids. The tallest, and obviously the oldest, was holding a bundle that Sanji assumed was Souta's newest baby.

Roughnut grabbed a hold of Snotlout's vest and dragged him to the ground before he could take off with Hook Fang. She got right in his face. "You want to make me stay here without my husband to take care of six kids, one being newborn?"

Snotlout's eyes shifted left and right looking for help. Souta raised his brow at the man, he wouldn't help him. Hiccup and Rock had taken to helping Usopp get back on his feet. His eyes landed on Sanji. When Sanji noticed the pleading look he took a puff of his cigarette. He let out the smoke and looked at the simpering male. "I don't fight women," he stated. "On my side or not. I can't disappoint a lady."

"She's not a lady," a male voice said. A male version of the scrawny woman appeared. "She's my sister and mother of my nieces and nephews."

"Souta would disagree about her not being a lady," Gobber pointed out.

"Lalalalala, I'm not listening." Toughnut put his hands to his ears.

"And that's why you're still single," Gobber mused quietly.

"What did you say?" Toughnut removed his hands.

"I didn't say anything," Gobber walked away.

"What have we stepped into," Sanji wondered to himself.

"It looks like everyone started having fun before we did," a voice called above. Cloud Jumper was easing down to the ground with Valka and Nami.

Once the dragon landed Sanji spun in their direction, hearts in his eyes. "Nami-Swan!" he called out, hands raised in the air. Nami slid to the ground and stopped Sanji's approach by putting her hand on his forehead and pushing him away.

"I thought you said they were a couple," Rock pointed out to Hiccup.

"It's a strange relationship," Hiccup covered. "It's kind of like the twin's, only romantic and not brotherly sisterly." Rock nodded his head in understanding. When he looked away Hiccup let out a sigh of relief.

Hiccup finally took notice of all the villagers that were present. "Um, Gobber, where's Eret?"

Rock turned to look at Gobber as well. "I asked him that myself," he

said. "All he said was that Eret and Skull Crusher were out for a morning flight. It's past noon now."

"Um, about that..."

~ Rain could see Berk on the horizon. She was about to urge Darkess to go faster when Eret called out for her to wait. "Maybe I should land first," he said. "That way I'm already on the ground to help hold back Rock."

"Why would you need to do that?" Rain asked.

Eret looked at where Luffy had both arms wrapped around her waist tightly. "You seriously think he won't jump to conclusions?"

Rain looked down and then blushed when she realized how tightly Luffy was holding on. She knew he wouldn't let go either. He was just as stubborn as Kagome. Rain nodded her head in acquiesces. "We'll hang back for a little while." Eret nodded as he urged Skull Crusher to go just a little faster.

Luffy squeezed Rain a tighter. She looked over her shoulder to see if he wanted something. Luffy took advantage and kissed her on the lips. He pulled back with a grin. "I'll be fine," he told her. "Remember that I'm a rubber man. It takes a lot for someone to hurt me in a fight. I'll convince your brother that I'm worthy of you."

"I know you can fight Rock," Rain said. "I've seen you fight in Dressrosa. I just worry about what Rock will think of me. He might think that I betrayed him and the village."

"Is my mom a part of the village?"

"Well, yes."

"Then so am I."

Rain let out a laugh when she realized that he was right. Rock couldn't use the he was a foreigner bit against her, not with Kagome being a part of Berk. If only Luffy showed this insightfulness all the time, what kind of crew would the Strawhats be then? Rain shuddered at the thought. She was sure that Luffy would have been one of the Yonko long ago if that was the case.

~ Eret landed just as Gobber was starting to sweat under Hiccup and Rock's gazes. "Another friend?" Rock asked as he noticed Garp.

"This is Kagome's father-in-law," Eret announced. He got off of Skull Crusher and approached the chief. "He wanted to accompany her son here."

"What are you talking about?" Rock asked.

Garp was grinning from ear to ear. "My grandson and future gra..."

Both Nami and Usopp jumped on the man to cover his mouth. They succeeded in keeping him quiet, but not in taking him down. "We don't need to make him mad early," Usopp hissed. "Do you see him? He towers over you. How much bigger do you think he is to Luffy?"

"What's going on?" Rock asked. He was looking at Eret and Hiccup. The moment was interrupted when Skull Crusher let out a roar.

~ "That's the signal," Rain said. "Eret and Skull have landed." She turned to look at Luffy. "Be ready to fight the moment that we land." Luffy nodded with a smirk on his face.

~ Gobber hobbled up next to Rock while Eret took up his other side. Hiccup moved to stand right in front of him. Rock's eyes narrowed as he looked from one man to another. "Why do I get the feeling I'm not going to like what happens next?"

No one said a word, they didn't have time. Darkess landed right next to Skull Crusher. At first Rock smiled, excited to have his sister back. Then he noticed the arms of the man behind her around her waist. His eyes turned from glad to narrowed slits. Sanji stepped back when he felt the killing aura coming from Rock in waves. Even Garp stopped trying to pretend that Nami and Usopp were restraining him.

Luffy gave Rain a squeeze of reassurance just before he got down. He then lifted Rain out of the saddle and kept an arm around her shoulders. He looked towards the glowering man with a serious expression on his face, almost daring him to say something.

Rock moved to stomp towards the man who dared touch his sister. Eret and Gobber each grabbed a hold of his arms while Hiccup put his hands on either shoulder, staring him down. "It's Rain's decision," Hiccup said. "If she decides to be with someone then we need to step back and let it happen."

"You're letting that Yak turd corrupt your own daughter?" Rock accused.

Luffy leaned over to Rain. "What's a Yak?" he whispered. Rain pointed off to the side where a fenced in area was. Luffy turned to see and blinked at the hairy, ugly animal grazing.

His head snapped back to the four arguing men. "He doesn't mean it," Rain said. "He's just scared right now. He's worried that I'll leave him and stop being a part of his family."

"You need to calm down," Hiccup was shouting. "Look at it this way. He's Kagome's son. Isn't that better than some stranger?"

Luffy squeezed Rain's shoulders and then released her. He strode up to the four men. "You got a problem with your sister and me?" he snapped. Silence fell in the village. The only noise being the various livestock that couldn't sense the danger building. "You want to fight then I'll fight you. I won't let you tear the two of us apart just because you're scared."

"I'm not scared," Rock growled.

"Not from where I'm standing," Luffy baited. "Why else don't you let Rain have suitors? You're scared that she'll quit loving you as her brother. I'll fight you to prove that not only am I worthy of your sister, but to also show you that I won't let you come in between us."

Rock straightened from where he was pulling against Gobber and Eret. The two men let go, sensing that he was no longer fighting them. "If I win then you leave Rain and Berk."

"No," Luffy simply said.

Valka immediately started laughing. "You won't get him to agree Rock," she said. "That's the same attitude he used to get Rain to join him and his crew."

"You're a pirate?" Rock asked, stunned.

"I'm going to be the Pirate King." Luffy kept his face serious.

"That's even more reason not to let you be anywhere near my sister." Rock then turned accusing eyes towards Hiccup. "You allowed this?"

"Your grandmother has vouched for him and his crew," Hiccup defended. "You heard her when she first came back with news. He's also Kagome's son. I've had the pleasure of meeting and talking with everyone in his crew. They're not bad people son."

"A pirate is always bad," Rock denied. "They're the same as the Berserkers that killed Mom. Now you're telling me that Rain has become one of them? My sister has become someone who tears apart families?"

Rain's breath hitched at the accusation. Nami came up to her and held her. She locked eyes with Luffy, silently telling him that she would take care of Rain while he handled this. Sanji stood in front of the two women confidently. Usopp stood next to him, shaking like a leaf. Rock didn't notice any of this. He was still accusing Hiccup of allowing his sweet little sister to turn into some pirates harlot. Rain couldn't stop the sob from coming out. Her own brother was accusing her of things she never did.

Eret and Gobber moved to grab Rock again while Valka made her way over, ready to slap him. Hiccup had his hand on his sword, chief or not he wouldn't let Rock get away with treating his own sister like that. Before any of them could act on their intentions a fist came flying past them and hit Rock squarely in the jaw.

Rock fell on to his backside, stunned into silence. Luffy's stretched hand returned to him as the village stared in wonder. "You take that back," he seethed. He started to purposefully walked towards Rock. Hiccup and the others parted for him to pass. "You take back what you said and apologize to Rain." Luffy's eyes were hidden by the rim of his hat.

Rock rubbed his jaw in wonder. He hadn't realized what happened until Luffy was standing over him. He pondered what Luffy was demanding of him. A look of horror crossed his features. He quickly looked past Luffy to see if Rain heard him. Guilt ripped at his chest as he saw Rain on her knees, crying as she was being held by the red-haired woman. Sanji stepped to the side to block his view, looking at him in malice. "A man should never hurt a woman," he seethed. "Especially her feelings. I would love nothing more than to teach you that, but

it's not my place."

"I got this Sanji," Luffy spoke calmly. He moved so that he was the only thing that Rock could see. "You better apologize to her right now." Rock could finally see Luffy's eyes, they were filled with hate and promised pain if he didn't do what he said soon.

Rock slowly got to his feet. He sighed as he rubbed his face. "Rain, look, I didn't mean to say that about you," he started. "I was just mad that Grandma and Dad let some pirate try to corrupt you."

Rain slowly stopped crying, but she didn't look up from her place. She leaned back away from Nami, taking in deep breaths. "Are you okay?" Nami asked.

"I just need a minute," Rain whispered. She didn't look at Rock when she spoke next. "Most of the time people speak what they really feel when they're angry." She was just loud enough for Rock to hear her. "Do you really think that I would do something like that, in a pirate crew or not?"

Rock tried to move around Luffy to see about talking to Rain face to face. Luffy, however, wouldn't allow it. He moved directly into Rock's path. Until he heard from Rain that it was okay to let Rock past he wouldn't be getting anywhere near her.

Rock glanced at Luffy and saw that he still had the same look in his eyes. "Rain, I don't think that you would do that. I know you better than that. I just wasn't thinking." Rain didn't respond and Luffy didn't move. Rock's shoulders slumped in defeat. "I'm sorry I said that Rain. You're my baby sister, I don't want to hurt you. I didn't really mean it."

"How are we suppose to believe that?" Nami demanded.

Rock looked at the woman. She was glaring at him like he was the lowest thing on the planet. He agreed with her, he had no excuse. Rock then turned to look at Luffy. "You'll treat her right?" he asked low enough for only Luffy to hear. Luffy nodded his head once. "If you don't you'll have me to answer to."

Rock raised his voice for everyone to hear. "I'm happy to welcome into the family Kagome's son and Rain's intended, Luffy."

Rain turned teary eyes towards the two in shock. Sanji smiled at her and moved so she could get a clear look. Rock clasped arms with Luffy.

"Well it's about time," Roughnut snapped. She looked to the other villagers and glared. "What are all of you doing just standing there for?"

"It's an engagement party!" Valka called. "Start the cook fires, we're going to have a feast."

Nami gave Rain a quick hug in comfort then ran to join the other women. "Wait, what are we doing?" Rain asked. She was stunned for a moment.

Sanji rolled up his sleeves and headed in the same direction of the

women. "I suppose I should go and give them a hand. They have no idea how much Luffy and Garp are going to eat."

Luffy helped Rain back up to her feet. "I didn't just hear them say that it's our engagement party," she said.

"You sure did," Luffy grinned.

"You're okay with this? Don't you think that it's a little sudden?"

"Not at all," Luffy said. "I planned on marrying you soon either way. It's just a matter of how fast I can become the Pirate King."

"You want some help with that?" Rock asked. He came up to the two of them. "My dragon riders have gotten lazy. No one bothers us on this island so they have nothing to test their skills on. It might help you reach your goals faster to have an entire dragon army on your side." Luffy smirked as he nodded.

"Your mom is going to have kittens," Rain mused. "I can just see it now. The sky will be blackened by the sight of dragons covering the sky. All ready and willing to follow your beck and call."

"I can't wait to see her reaction to the story of how Rock agreed to let you get married," Snotlout grinned. "She's going to hurt you so bad." He was looking at Rock at this point. Rock paled at the image that it invoked.

Garp got in between Rain and Luffy. "I hate to break things up," he interrupted. "However, it's time that Luffy and I got down to training." Luffy started whining as Garp dragged him off. "We'll be back and washed up in time for the party."

~ A little ways off from the party the two men squared off. "Why do you think that Blackbeard is gathering information on your crew?" Garp asked. The question was so out of the blue that it surprised Luffy. He broke his stance and put his hand to his chin. He stood in silence for a few minutes. "You can't think of why, can you? Lucky for you that I happen to know. Blackbeard is looking for weaknesses that he can exploit. He's looking to blackmailing your crew into abandoning you or joining his crew. He might even be looking to blackmailing you into joining his crew. Before, I wouldn't have worried about him finding a way to blackmail you." Garp then looked back to the village. "Things change though, you have a fiance to worry about."

Luffy blinked and looked back to the village. The sounds of happy laughter could reach their ears. "I shutter to think what could happen to such a sweet person if Blackbeard got a hold of her," Garp mused.

"I'm not afraid," Luffy said. "She wouldn't let anyone touch her."

"You can't be sure of that."

"Rain is the Dragon Mistress," Luffy revealed to Garp. "She single-handedly invaded a Marine Base, stole secret documents from a room that was supposed to be hidden. She's not so easy to

corner."

Garp nodded his head in understanding. "Then I underestimated her," he admitted. "That still doesn't change the fact that Blackbeard could use her against you. He has the power of darkness. He could drag her to him if she tried to escape or fly. Without a devil fruit power of her own she's next to powerless against him and his crew." Luffy was silent as he took in what Garp was saying.

Garp started to head back to the village. "She's safest on this island. No Marine ship or pirate ship would ever notice that an entire village is on this island. It's nothing but sheer cliffs surrounded by ocean. Only the top is fertile and livable. No one noticed before, they won't notice now." He walked away, leaving Luffy to his thoughts.

Several long minutes later Luffy made his way back to the village. When he reached the center he caught Garp's eyes and nodded. Telling him that he was going to leave Rain with her family. Luffy decided he would come and get Rain once Blackbeard was taken care of.

Luffy found Rain with Valka, Roughnut and his maternal Grandmother Akita. Said woman stood up and hugged Luffy tightly. "I'm so happy to see you," she said. "Now that you know where we are you don't need to be such a stranger."

"I promise to come and visit," Luffy said. He gave Akita a hug in return. Once they parted he looked to Rain. "I need to talk to you, in private." Rain looked confused, but nodded and followed Luffy.

Once they were far enough away from everyone Luffy stopped. He turned and faced Rain, though his features were downcast. "What's the matter?" Rain asked. "Aren't you happy that this is our engagement?"

"That's not it," Luffy immediately said. His voice was slightly panicked and raised. He realized that his actions were sending the wrong message. "I'm excited that we're engaged," he said more quietly. He took Rain into his arms and held her. "I'm tempted to skip the engagement and marry you. But if I did that my mom would kill me."

"Good to know you know her so well already." Rain pulled away enough to look into Luffy's eyes. "So what's really bothering you?"

"I think that you should stay here until we come back," Luffy said.

"What?"

"It's too dangerous for you to be seen with me right now," he reasoned. "There's no telling what could happen to us."

"There's always been that danger," Rain argued. She stopped and thought for a moment. Luffy was acting strange ever since he went to train with Garp. Her eyes widened at the epiphany. "What did your grandpa say to you?"

"He didn't..."

"Don't try that with me," Rain snapped. "You didn't act like this until you came back from being alone with him. What did he say to you?"

Luffy pulled Rain back down to his shoulder. "He told me that Blackbeard is looking for a weakness in my crew and myself. If he learned about you then he could hurt you trying to get to me."

Rain pulled away from Luffy and hit him upside the head. "You dunderhead," she chastised. "First off, no one knows that I'm part of your crew. They only know of the masked Dragon Mistress."

"It won't take long for people to put the two together," Luffy argued.

"Irrelevant," Rain waived that aside. "I'm not without my own tricks. One of the benefits of having your father being a thinker instead of a fighter. I have many tools at my disposal that no one from this land has ever seen. I have the element of surprise on my side from every angle."

"I can't risk you being hurt," Luffy protested.

"Then we strike first," Rain reasoned.

"What?"

Rain smirked at Luffy this time. "We're a village of vikings Luffy," she said.

"What are those?"

"We're warriors no matter how you look at it. Each person in this village is taught how to fight. Even the children know how to swing a battle axe. We take the Blackbeard pirates by surprise, exploit their weaknesses to win."

"I don't know their weakness."

"They have the same one that you do," Rain explained. She smiled at the look of confusion on Luffy's face. "You ate a devil fruit, he ate a devil fruit. You both captain a pirate ship. What would happen if your ship were to sink?" Understanding dawned on Luffy's face. "Now you're getting it. We sink Blackbeard's ship while he's in the middle of the ocean and make sure that there's nothing for him to cling to."

"His crew could save him like mine does."

"Your crew are also your friends," Rain reasoned. "I doubt that Blackbeard has such a relationship with all of his crew."

"What about other devil fruit users on his ship?" Luffy asked. "I heard that he's been gathering users and either recruiting them or killing them."

"We won't know for sure until we see his ship," Rain admitted. "Although, I have to say that I doubt he would keep powerful people close to him if he's forced them to obey. If it were me I would look

for a way to escape or kill him in his sleep."

"You would do that?"

"Viking training," Rain said as if that explained everything. "In either event, we can send out some tracking dragons in the morning. They'll find Blackbeard and report back. Once we have a fix on their location a team of dragon riders can go and sink his ship. He won't know what hit him. He certainly won't expect a dragon attack."

Luffy was silent as he thought about it. He didn't like using such indirect methods to win. As he stared at Rain he thought about what it would be like to travel without her. He also thought about what would happen if they didn't attack Blackbeard and he managed to get his hands on Rain. Not liking either thought, Luffy pulled Rain back into his arms. "We'll do it your way," he said. "I can't be without you."

"Glad you see it that way," Rain said. She tightened her hold on Luffy. "I would hate to be left here without you."

"I'll go and talk to your brother," Luffy said as he pulled back. "I'm sure that he'll be more than happy to take out a possible threat to his baby sister." Luffy then kissed Rain, keeping the kiss going longer than necessary. He pulled back and pulled her by the hand back towards where the party was being set up.

They found Rock and Hiccup discussing who should go with Luffy and the Strawhats. "I need to talk to you Rock," Luffy announced. He then explained the situation to the two of them.

"I'll send Eret and his team out in the morning," Rock said without hesitation.

"Hold on a minute," Hiccup argued. "This is a life we're talking about here. I'm sure that if we talked with him that we'll come up with a solution."

Snotlout came up, looking at Hiccup disbelieving. "This man is basically threatening your daughter's life. You really going to let him wander around free? You know what a man like that is like. You told us the story about Drago Bloodfist. This guy sounds exactly like him. Except he's making people his slaves instead of dragons." There was silence as everyone looked at Snotlout in surprise. "What?"

"I hate to say it," Fishlegs put in from the side. "He has a point Hiccup. If we don't take action first than Rain could be hurt. Here or not, people will start wondering where the 'Dragon Mistress' came from and start looking for dragons. It will eventually lead them here and they'll start looking for a way to climb those cliffs. It's only a matter of time."

Hiccup sighed in defeat. He was outnumbered and everyone made very good points. "Alright then," he submitted. "But just so we're clear, I'm not happy about this."

"All part of being a chief, right Dad?" Rock had a satisfied smirk on his face. "Making the tough choices and what's good for the people? Remaining in hiding won't help us. But we do need to take out any possible threats to our well-being. I'm sure that also includes the

navy. From what I hear they're not in the habit of letting people have a way to fight against them, whether they mean harm or not."

"While this is a fascinating discussion," Valka walked up. "Everything is ready to start. Let's get the honored couple in place and start this party." The somberness was broken to be replaced with cheer.

Sometime during the night Rock gave Eret and his tracking team their instructions. They agreed to leave as soon as they were able.

~ The next day the trackers had left before dawn. It was midmorning when they started returning. The first few had negative reports. Eret and his second-hand man arrived after everyone else in their squad. "We found a ship with a captain that fits your description," he said to Nami.

"Why didn't you look for one with my description?" Luffy asked.

"Because 'a man that looks like an idiot' is not a good description," Nami snapped.

"There's a problem though," Eret stopped an argument before it started. "The ship isn't out at sea like we hoped. It's docked at a small island that has a small mountain that looks too steep to climb."

Nami pulled out a map. "Could you show me which island it is?" she asked. Eret looked at the map for a minute before he pointed out an island that looked like it was surrounded by storm clouds. "That's what I was afraid of."

"You mean the island with box guy?" Luffy asked.

"That's the one," Nami agreed.

"They better not have hurt him," Luffy growled. He started to head towards Darkess. He took a hold of Rain's arm gently. "We need to get over there fast."

"Right then," Hiccup started. "For this, I think those with the most experience should be the ones to go."

"Does that mean that Souta gets to watch the kids?" Roughnut asked. No one missed the excited tone in her voice.

"That's right," Hiccup said. He turned towards Souta at this point. "Sorry about this, but we need the original riders for such a dangerous mission."

"Eret isn't an original rider," Souta pointed out.

"He has more experience than you," Snotlout said.

Hiccup rolled his eyes and put his hand on Souta's shoulder. "I know you enjoy helping us defend the people and village, but your kids need you. I can't take both of their parents. If I did I wouldn't have a village to come home to."

"Point taken," Souta admitted. "Alright, I'll watch the terrors until you get back."

"Before we leave," Sanji came up. "Make sure that you destroy his ship. No one goes to that island so there will be no rescue for him. He'll be stranded unless he wants to swim. It will take him a while to build a raft strong enough to withstand the storms that surround the island, even then I doubt he can make it." Everyone nodded in understanding. Luffy rode with Rain as always. Usopp changed who he rode with. He got on the back of Meatlug with Fishlegs. Valka and Nami paired up again while Sanji joined Snotlout. Hiccup told him that Toothless will move too fast for him to stay on. Eret led the way and the team of dragon riders were off.

17. Kagome vs an Admiral

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****A Family of Outlaws****

Chapter Sixteen: Kagome vs. an Admiral

It was night in the waters of the New World. A ship was sailing lazily through the waters. A light could be seen in the captain's cabin. Inside Sabo, Dragon and Kagome were gathered around a map spread on the table. "The problem is the Celestial Dragons," Sabo was saying. "They're so full of themselves that they believe they're gods." He smirked when he heard Kagome's scoff. "They're so high in the World Governments political structure that we have to go through all the different branches before we can touch them."

"This isn't so," Kagome came back. "The main reason that people believe in Kami.." She paused at Sabo's strange look. "Sorry, God, is because God is immortal. Which means that God can't die, let alone bleed. Show the people that the Celestial Dragons are human just like everyone else and you will have them rallying against their oppression."

Dragon had a thoughtful look on his face. "It's a good plan," he finally said. "The question becomes how do we get to that point? We can't get a hold of a single Dragon when they're bound to beef up security after our announcement."

"It was your announcement husband," Kagome teased. "If you had thought it through a little more then you would have recognized that keeping your true intentions secret is better in the long run. But, what's done is done. We can't unmake the past. Luckily for you, I have a solution to the security as well."

"By all means," Dragon invited. "I would like to hear this battle strategy of yours."

"We have to meet up with Rain and Luffy. She's the only one with a messenger dragon that can go between the armies. Plus, we need dragons and a lot of them."

~ Dragon's ship spends the next week sailing to the Marine Headquarters. "We need dragons, but we're still attacking the Marines anyway," Sabo informed Koala. "The plan is to make the Celestial Dragons so spitting mad that they'll lower their guard. We're hoping they'll come out of whatever hole they crawled in to lash out at us. That's when we'll have Rain and her people swoop down on them with their dragons. If we can capture just one then we'll be able to show the people that the dragons are not gods."

"It sounds like a good plan," Koala nodded. "Let's hope everything goes as smoothly in reality. Are we on our way to meet up with the rest of the fleet?"

"They should already be waiting near the Marine HQ for us," Sabo confirmed. "We should meet up with them tomorrow."

"Won't the Marines notice a fleet gathering so close to them?" Koala was concerned that their plan was going to fail before it started.

"There's a cluster of islands around the area, good for ambushes," Sabo explained. "I'm sure that's why they choose this specific location for their new base. It's also a weakness. We can move our own ships in undetected. Not to mention the number of Revolution sympathizers we have within their ranks."

~ The next day Sabo took control of the fleet and began moving on the Marine base. Dragon and Kagome took flight on Shadow to scout the other islands, looking for any possible obstacles to the Revolutionary Fleet. They went from island to island for nearly an hour before Dragon spotted something out of the ordinary. "That has to be a secondary outpost," he announced. Dragon was pointing to an island that wasn't much different from the others. This one, however, was the only small island with a post that held an antanna of some sort for receiving transponder snail signals.

"It doesn't seem like they've spotted us," Kagome noted. "Shall we mess with them a little?"

Dragon smirked and leaned forward so his mouth was next to her ear. "What did you have in mind love?" he asked.

The sudden warmth of his breath caused Kagome to involuntarily shudder. "Now's not the time for that, Dragon."

"I don't know what you mean," Dragon played innocent.

Kagome let out a growl and then switched back to the topic of the island. "Why don't we make them abandon the island? Sabotage some of their equip, weapons and such. Then we'll have Shadow scare them off of the island. So far the marines only know about Darkess. In comparison to size, Shadow appearing out of thin air is bound to send them running for the boats."

Dragon let out a laugh, imagining the reaction of the marines. "I

like it," he managed to say. "Now to land without them seeing us."

"Ever wonder what it was like to float in air with no support?" Kagome gave Shadow a signal without waiting for Dragon to respond. Shadow shimmered and seemed to vanish out from under the riders. It was so sudden and without warning that Dragon flinched and gripped Kagome tighter around the waist.

When Dragon finally realized they weren't falling Kagome was already laughing hysterically. "It's not funny," he grumbled.

"You're right," Kagome snickered. "It was hilarious, you should have seen the look on your face. Sabo is going to get a kick out of this."

"You would shame the man you love?"

"Consider it payback for messing with me a few minutes ago."

~ As the battle at the Marine base started Kagome and Dragon made it impossible for the outpost to give the main forces any support. Gunpowder for the cannons was soaking wet, ropes and pulleys looked to be burned or chewed through. Tents fell on top of troops still inside. Most, if not all, transponder snails went missing. As the officer in charge was demanding answers the sailors facing him paled suddenly. Shadow had dropped herameleon abilities directly behind him. The officer slowly turned to see what had spooked his men.

At the sight, the officer once again turned around slowly to face the nearest boat. He took off running and the other sailors were quick to follow. Now empty of all except Shadow, Kagome and Dragon walked into the clearing used for the camp, laughing. They stood directly in the middle of the camp. "Viola!" Kagome cheered. "We officially have the island to ourselves."

"If not for the battle I would take advantage of that bit of information." Dragon smirked down at a now red-faced Kagome.

"You perv," Kagome lightly smacked Dragon on the shoulder.

"Right now I have to join Sabo and lead the troops," Dragon headed for Shadow.

"Don't you mean 'we'?" Kagome followed.

"You will stay here," Dragon responded. "I won't have you putting yourself in danger."

"How dare you?" Kagome started yelling. "I'm fully capable of helping in the fight. I will not be left behind like some helpless china doll."

"There are going to be devil fruit users in this battle that will be difficult to fight," Dragon explained. "They will be after you specifically if they realize that you're there. You have a natural gift for cancelling out that power. It gives us the advantage and not them. They'll either aim for your capture or..." Dragon couldn't finish that train of thought.

"I am your wife," Kagome argued. "We've been apart for almost twenty years. Now that we've found each other you want to leave me behind again. My place is at your side, helping to free the people."

"You're the most valuable person to me," Dragon whirled around to face Kagome. "If something happened to you I wouldn't be able to live with myself, let alone face our son. You'll stay here, where it's safe, and wait for me to return." Dragon then crashed his lips to Kagome's, stopping any argument she had.

While Kagome was still in a daze Dragon leapt onto Shadow and took off. "Shadow," Kagome called out. "You're taking his side?!" Shadow bugled sadly, circled the sky around Kagome, then flew off towards the battle.

"He must have had this planned." Kagome started muttering while pacing the ruined camp. "How else could he have convinced my partner to abandon me so quickly?"

As Kagome stormed through the camp, looking for something not broken so she could break it, a noise drew her attention. A transponder snail in the bushes was ringing consistantly. "Huh," Kagome muttered. "We must have accidentally knocked that one over hear." She shrugged, it worked out since no one found it to call for aid.

Kagome picked up the receiver, tired of all the racket it was making. She sat and listened for a minute, wondering who was on the other end. "This is Headquarters," a voice shouted. "Is anyone there? We need reinforcements! Why aren't you responding?"

Kagome let a sly grin spread across her face and started talking. "Sorry, but no one's available to answer your call at this time. If you'd like to leave a message please wait for the beep, then press pound, press three, then dial your name, then press six and dial your number, the press star, press sixty-nine and ask for extension forty-four forty-three, then leave your name and message. If you want to leave your number and the time you called please press star twice, bark like a dog, spin in a circle, press one twenty-six times and wait for the beep. Have a nice day." Quickly hanging up the snail, Kagome couldn't contain the laughter that was bubbling up inside. It felt good to relieve some of the anger Dragon gave her.

~ Shadow and Dragon landed on the deck of the main fleet vessel. Sabo is there to greet them with a report. "The Marine fleet is resilient," he began. "However, we are gaining the upperhand. We've been runing our ships and crews in shifts. We've had a few vessels that needed to retreat due to heavy damage, but are casualties are minimal."

Dragon nodded, taking in the information. Before he could issue more orders to the fleet a sailor ran up to them, holding out a spy transponder snail. "I have some urgent news. The main base of the marines is trying to reach the island that you just came from." Just as the sailor finished his report the spy snail stopped ringing. A few seconds later they heard a voice calling for aid. A few seconds later they could hear Kagome's voice. As they listened Sabo had to muffle his laughter so that they could hear the rest.

As the spy snail fell silent Sabo no longer felt the need to stifle

his laughter. He let out a loud noise like a sob and bent over laughing. Dragon was smirking and shaking his head.

~ At the marine base the sailor that had tried to call for aid stared at the transponder snail in bewilderment. He had no idea what happened, but it didn't seem like their reinforcements were able to help. "Now that seems odd," a voice from behind said. The sailor turned to see Admiral Kizaru looking at him with a dumbfounded expression. "Why would the secondary base leave a message like that?" Several men that had been in the room also turned to look towards the admiral. All of them had shocked expressions on their faces. They simply could not believe that a commanding officer could be so simple-minded. "Maybe I should go see what's going on." Kizaru left the room without getting a response from the others.

~ Kagome shuffled through the ruined marine camp. She toed at a few of the scattered papers around. They didn't have any information that Dragon and the Revolutionary army had. She then froze in her spot when she heard a male voice call out for the commander. Taking her bow she notched an arrow and slowly made her way around the half fallen tent that separated her and the male. As he came into view Kagome noted that his back was turned to her. She took note of the white coat he wore that signified his rank as an admiral.

A searing anger filled Kagome at the sight. She had heard the stories as she traveled with Luffy's crew. The admirals had tried to kill her son based solely on the reason he was protecting someone from slavery, his adopted brother was the son of Gol Rodger and that he himself was the son of Dragon.

Normally Kagome wasn't one for using methods of battle that were deemed unworthy and unfair. This time she would make an exception. A mother would do anything for her child, even kill for them. Kagome loosed her arrow while the admiral still had his back turned. The arrow glowed a slight pink before embedding itself in the man's shoulder.

~ Kizaru grunted when a force slammed into his right shoulder, followed by a searing pain. He looked down to see an arrowhead piercing out the front. Glancing behind showed the shaft of the arrow on the other side. Blood was starting to stain his yellow suit. Kizaru turned around slowly, wondering how he could have gotten hurt in the first place. He had the powers of the Light Devil Fruit which meant that nothing could hurt him. To his bewilderment, a petite woman that looked to be in late thirties to early forties stood in front of him. She was perfectly poised with another arrow ready and pointed at his heart.

"That first shot was only a warning," she said. "You will answer all of my questions truthfully. If you give me the truth I might let you live. My one and only question for you, why is your government so bent on killing my only son?"

"Who's your son?" Kizaru's head cocked to the side in confusion.

"Don't play coy with me," Kagome snapped. "You know full well that I talk about Luffy."

"You mean 'Straw Hat' Luffy?" Kizaru questioned. When all he received

was a continued glare he took that as a 'yes'. "It's simple, he's the son of the most dangerous man alive."

"That's no reason to kill someone," Kagome snapped. "To you and your buddies in the marines the most dangerous person in the world right now is me. You never threaten the life of a child in front of their mother."

Not fully knowing all the details, Kizaru understood that he had to at least arrest this woman. He tried to use his powers of light to get behind her. He had a look of shock on his face when nothing happened. He winced when another arrow was imbedded into his foot.

"That won't work with me," Kagome hissed. "Looks like you have no idea how to fight with your devil fruit powers being sealed." Kagome carefully approached, not close enough for him to reach her though. "You obviously haven't figured out who I am and what I can do. Either that or your superiors keep you in the dark. My name is Monkey-Higarashi Kagome. I'm the wife of Monkey D. Dragon and mother to Monkey D. Luffy. I have the ability to seal devil fruit powers. So now one of the all mighty admirals is nothing more than a harmless fool."

Kizaru's eyes crossed and his lips stuck out. "I'm not sure what you're talking about," he said. His statement caused Kagome to growl. She was severely wondering how this man made it so high in marine ranks. "I do see the benefits of you sealing my power though." Kizaru surprised Kagome by ignoring the pain in his foot and rushing forward. The sudden action caused Kagome to miss her shot.

Kizaru took hold of Kagome's free hand and knocked the bow out of her grasp with his other hand. Now that he had a hold of her he started searching his pockets for his set of cuffs. Kagome pulled on her captured wrist, but his grip was too tight. In a last ditch effort she stomped on his injured foot. Kizaru grunted and winced, but he did not loosen his hold.

Kizaru had just pulled the cuffs free when a strong force hit him. It caused him to release Kagome and both fell to the ground, Kizaru further from Kagome.

Kagome blinked and shook her head to clear it. She looked up to see Sabo holding out a hand to help her stand up. "Are you alright?" he asked. Kagome nodded and took his offered hand.

On her own two feet again, Kagome started looking around to see if she could tell what happened. She found Dragon holding Kizaru down as he placed the cuffs he was about to use on Kagome on him. "I imagine that these are infused with a sea prism stone," Dragon was saying. "So when the effects of Kagome's power wears off you still won't be able to do anything."

Kagome turned her attention back to Sabo. "Shouldn't you be leading the fleet? Why are you both back here?"

"After we picked up your 'conversation' with the spy snail Dragon noticed a flash of light headed to the island he left you on. We recognized it as one of the admirals from the marines. Dragon then jumped onto Shadow to come to your rescue, I tagged along. It's a

good thing we came too. Who knows what the marines would have done to you." Kagome hid her eyes behind her bangs. She felt like no one believed in her fighting abilities.

"Don't look so down," Sabo said. "It's not that we don't think you can defend yourself. It's just that Dragon is a bit paranoid when it comes to you. Now he has no choice but to take you with us back to the fleet. It's the only way for him to keep his sanity and not worry now."

Kagome rolled her eyes at that. "He is such a baka," she muttered.

"What's that mean?" Sabo asked.

"It's a non-polite way of calling someone a fool." Sabo let out a hearty laugh at that point.

18. Attack on Blackbeard

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****Family of Outlaws****

Chapter 17: Attack on Blackbeard

The pounding of a hammer alerted the occupants of the two vessels that something was going on. Robin was the first one to go investigate what the cause was. She came to the sight of Franky putting up a new frame aboard the Sunny. "What are you doing Franky?" she asked.

The cyborg paused in his work. He turned and looked up at Robin, moving his sunglasses up so she could see his eyes. "I said that I was going to make a special cabin for Luffy and Rain while they were away," he stated. "I thought that much was obvious."

"I didn't realize that you were serious," Robin stated. "I had assumed that you were just teasing Rain."

"Well," Franky let a huge grin slip across his face. "There's that too."

Rain and Luffy were flying in the heart of the team sent to deal with Blackbeard. "Why can't we be in front?" Luffy asked. "I'm the captain and should be at the front. Your dad and friends are surrounding us like we need protection."

"First off," Rain looked back patiently. "When we're flying the lead belongs to the alpha dragon. That would be Darkess' father, Toothless. Second, it's a dragon's instinct to protect the young or hatchlings. That's why all the other dragons have surrounded us and Darkess. Darkess is the youngest dragon in this group. It's not that the riders have guided them to fly in this pattern, it's what the dragons are doing on their own. Riders and dragons have unique bonds. A dragon will often listen to the direction of the rider. There are

instances where we will be ignored if the dragon feels it's too dangerous or their instinct demands a certain behavior. We riders have learned long ago not to fight that instinct. Dragons are natural born flyers, riders are not." Luffy pouted as he begrudgingly accepted what Rain was saying.

"The island is coming up," Nami called. She was pointing to a group of clouds. It was so dark within them that none could see the island in the eye of the storm.

"We're not flying through that," Hiccup declared. He and Toothless then started to gain in altitude the closer they got.

Rain lowered her helmet over her face. "Take shallow breaths," she told Luffy. "The air is about to get very thin." The other dragons began to follow the alpha. Luffy followed Rain's advice and noticed that it was starting to get harder to breathe. "We'll fly over the storm," Rain continued. "That way we don't have to worry about wind and hail throwing us off course."

It only took a few minutes of flying over the clouds for the eye of the storm to come within sight. At the border of the clouds the dragons stopped their forward motion. They all gathered around Hiccup and Toothless. "They're bound to have someone left to guard their ship," Hiccup said. "We still need to take it out. The element of surprise and speed are our best weapon. Toothless and I will start the attack on the pirates that have taken up occupancy of the island. Rain, you and Darkess will start the attack to sink their ship. We need to keep them confused and off balance. Rough, Tough, you help Rain. Destroy as much of that ship as you can. I don't care how you do it. Everyone else follow up the attack with Toothless and I."

Luffy leapt over to join Hiccup on Toothless. "Blackbeard is mine," he declared. "Rain will be safe enough just by attacking the ship. I've been trained to use both Haki and Reiki. You'll need me to stop Blackbeard and anyone else from using their devil fruit abilities."

"Fair enough," Hiccup conceded.

Valka had Cloud Jumper move closer to Darkess and Rain. When they were close enough, Nami jumped over to join them. She sent Rain a charming smile when she looked at her in confusion. "There's no way I'm getting in the middle of the worst fighting."

Rain giggled a little and shook her head. She took a strap and tied it to the saddle. She gave the other end to Nami. "Tie this around your waist so you don't fall off. Darkess is going to be charging the ship at full speed." Nami nodded and silently did as Rain told her.

"Hiccup," Fishlegs called out. "Shouldn't Meatlug and I stay with the group attacking the ship?"

"Yeah," Usopp agreed as he sweat in fear. "Better yet, shouldn't we stay above the fighting to act as lookouts?"

"We'll need Meatlug to stop any of the pirates from escaping," Hiccup answered. "She can make molten rocks block their path."

"Snotlout and Hookfang could block their escape," Fishlegs argued.

"I'd rather avoid setting the forest on Fire," Hiccup countered. "If it makes you feel better then Snotlout and Hookfang can stay close to you and act as bodyguards."

"That makes me feel worse actually," Fishlegs groaned.

"Can I hop over to the two headed dragon?" Usopp asked.

"That's not a good idea," Sanji called. He pointed his lit cigarette in the direction of the twins. "Just look at those two." The blonde twins were getting psyched and ready for the battle. At one point they rammed their heads together. "They're bound to do something crazy and stupid like our captain. Do you really want to get in the middle of that?"

Usopp let out a sigh of disappointment and tightened his grip on Meatlug's saddle. "I'd rather stay with the slow dragon," he admitted.

"If that's all decided," Hiccup looked to everyone for their confirmation. "Rain, you and Darkess get us started. We'll follow a few seconds after to take advantage of the confusion." He then leaned over to Toothless' ear. "Do you know where the people on the island are?" Toothless bobbed his head 'yes'. "Then that's where we'll be attacking." He looked to Rain and nodded.

Rain took the signal from her father and urged Darkess into a free fall. She felt Nami lean closer to her back and move to hold onto her waist for a more secure grip. They were halfway to the target when she looked back to see the other dragons begin their own freefall. Barf and Belch were following Darkess while the others followed Toothless. Rain turned to face forward when she heard Darkess begin charging her attack. It was loud, no doubt about it, but if you didn't know what it was to begin with then it was still going to be a surprise.

Darkess aimed her attack at the waterline of the boat. She leveled off a little to steady herself and made the shot. True to Night Fury form she didn't miss. The ship shook violently in the aftermath. Steam rose from the water where it met the now burning wood of the ship. Using that as cover, Darkess veered away and flew in a different direction. With the attention of any pirates left to guard the ship on the new hole and the incoming water they never noticed a dragon gaining altitude on the other side of the ship.

The explosion of Darkess' attack reverberated around the island. Shouts could be heard from within the trees ordering everyone back to the ship. Toothless let loose his own volley of attacks to keep them from reaching their goal. Hookfang joined in on the fun. Meatlug dropped down in the path between the pirates and their ship, spewing molten rock on the path. Skullcrusher took down a few trees to make sure that they weren't able to go around the path.

It didn't take long for Luffy to spot Blackbeard in the chaos. He had a score to settle with him after all. Without waiting for anyone else, Luffy jumped off of Toothless. Hiccup called out to him, but

his voice was drowned out by all the other noise. Luffy went immediately into second gear and landed in a crouch in front of Blackbeard. "Straw Hat?" the fat man asked in disbelief.

"Jet Pistol!" Luffy began the attack, not bothering to begin a conversation. Blackbeard fell back, landing on his rear. This man stood for everything Luffy was against. He attacked innocent people for his own gain and crushed any that got in his way. Luffy hated pirates like him. To make it worse Blackbeard was the one that turned Ace over to the marines, resulting in Ace's death. Luffy wasn't about to let that go unpunished.

Sanji followed after Luffy. He couldn't allow his captain to have all the fun. One of Blackbeard's crew had drawn his sword. He was ready to slice into Luffy's back. Sanji stopped the swing with his foot. "I've felt stronger attacks from a marimo," he baited. "I can't allow a weakling like you to take a cheap shot."

"Thanks Sanji," Luffy said without looking.

With a sneer, Blackbeard stood and activated his devil fruit powers. Luffy responded by coating his hands in Haki. It didn't surprise Blackbeard that Straw Hat had learned to use Haki. The surprise came when the fists started glowing pink. Using the hesitation to his advantage Luffy began his attack. He hit Blackbeard squarely in the jaw. The other pirate was thrown off the ground and started spinning. He landed face down in a mud puddle. He came up sputtering and wiping at his eyes.

Blackbeard turned to face Luffy once again. "Haki won't save you from the darkness," he goaded.

"You rely too much on that power," Luffy growled. "If it's so great, why don't you use it on me now?" Blackbeard's face went from one of concentration to one of confusion. "Is something wrong?" Luffy continued. "Why don't you attack?"

The dragons continued the assault on both the ship and pirates that strayed away from the fighting captains. Rough and Tough were spinning around the ship, letting loose the gas from one of their dragon's heads. Once they were satisfied and the ship was no longer visible through the green fumes they lit a spark. The ship went up in flames like a matchstick. The twins knocked their heads together in triumph.

Rain and Darkess destroyed any lifeboats that managed to get away from the burning ship. They were moving so fast that the pirates with guns weren't able to track them accurately. The twins were constantly letting out more fumes so that they wouldn't be seen. Of course they were constantly igniting them as well.

Luffy held up his glowing fist. "You know about Haki," he stated. "But I didn't use Haki against you, not exactly. I was taught a new technique by my mom. I've sealed your devil fruit powers. Now you have to fight using your own strength. Do you even have any strength of your own?"

Terror crossed Blackbeard's face and he made to run. Toothless landed in his path and roared at him. Blackbeard took a look around him. His entire camp had been devastated by fire. A woman was freeing the

strange animals and Goemon from their cage. Next to her was a large creature that had the facial features of an owl. Two men with over-sized muscles were tying up the top members of his crew. Blackleg Sanji had knocked out his swordsman. He was sitting on his back and casually smoking. The sound of a footstep falling drew his attention. Straw Hat had gotten much closer in the time that he was distracted.

Luffy reared back his fist. "This one is for Ace," he shouted. His fist moved so fast towards Blackbeard that it seemed to disappear. The force knocked Blackbeard out of the clearing. Toothless let out a roar that signaled the end of the battle.

Cloud Jumper and Skullcrusher were carrying the executive pirates of Blackbeard between both of their claws. Sanji was riding Skullcrusher and Nami was back with Cloud Jumper. Rough and Tough with their dragons Barf and Belch followed behind them. Leading the way Luffy rode with Hookfang and Snotlout for the time being, Hookfang carrying Blackbeard. They were halfway back across the storm that surrounded the island.

"I have to say it again," Hiccup called. He and Toothless were chasing after them. Darkess and Rain were flanking them. Behind were Fishlegs and Usopp on Meatlug. "You can't just go and kill them."

"I'm not going to," Luffy answered. "Gramps gave me some good information before we left. There's a marine fleet not too far away from here. We'll drop our 'passengers' off in the water nearby. If the marines choose not to save them then they'll be the ones that are killing them."

"They'll be rescued Dad," Rain spoke softly. She was attempting to put Hiccup's fears to rest. "After Blackbeard betrayed them, the world government isn't going to let him get off so easily as to just let him drown. They'll also want to put his crew back behind the bars he let them out of. This is the only thing that will put Luffy's mind at ease. I would be less merciful if Blackbeard had been responsible for the death of Rock. In fact, I would insist on slitting his throat myself."

"Rain!" Hiccup looked at her sharply.

Rain shrugged her shoulders as she let the look of disappointment roll off. "We're vikings first and foremost," she reminded. "We're not known for being the advocates of peace you strive to lead us toward. Granted we're getting better at it. We still have to protect our own. Peace isn't always achieved by talking."

Hiccup sighed at the point. "I know that all too well," he said softly. "Your grandfather paid the price for that lesson. That doesn't mean that I will allow you to talk about killing others for doing you and our family wrong."

Rain smiled as she relented the point. "Fair enough," she said. "Just remember though Dad, our family is about to get a lot bigger."

"We already consider Kagome family," Hiccup said. His eyes looked up in thought. "Of course Luffy will be joining the family as soon as you two marry. So that means his grandfather and father will be

included in that. I don't see how you can say that it will be getting 'a lot' bigger though."

"Luffy considers all of his crew and friends family," Rain laughed. "Do you have any idea how many friends that Luffy and his crew have?"

"I'm trying not to think about it."

19. AN

To all my readers,

I'm posting this AN on everyone of my stories in hopes that the person who left a recent review reads this message. As to the review in question, here's what's written:

":What a terrible Mary-Sue. I hope she gets r*** then kills herself. Better yet, you also kill yourself? Thanks in advance! :D"

Now I ask all my readers, is that really an appropriate review? Telling me that I should kill myself? This reviewer is super lucky that I'm not a depressed/suicidal individual. As to the reviewer themselves, they regestered as a guest review so I don't know who posted this grotesquely inappropriate message. I will be writing a complaint to administrators of the website in regards to this review. Now, some guests leave decent reviews where you don't tell anyone to kill themselves. All it takes is one individual to ruin it for others. It's thanks to this individual that I will be pressing to no longer allow guest reviews.

I'm sure that the reviewer had hopes that I would become discouraged and no longer post my stories. Unfortunately for you I don't allow anyone to push me around. I'll keep posting my stories and I'll do it with or without you liking them. Just because you don't like a story is absolutely no reason to tell a person to kill themselves. EVER! I don't care who you are or who you think you are. You don't ever write something like that to anyone, under any circumstances. If you were a friend of mine and I knew you had posted this to someone you would no longer be my friend and I would make sure you knew how disappointed in your behavior I was.

End
file.